THE SHAKESPEARE ASSOCIATION BULLETIN

SAMUEL A. TANNENBAUM, *Editor*

Contributing Editors

MRS. ROBERT CARLTON MORRIS ROBERT M. SMITH WILLIAM T. HASTINGS

Advisory Board

JOSEPH Q. ADAMS HARDIN CRAIG WILLIAM ALLAN NEILSON

VOL. 13 . OCTOBER, 1938 No. 4

CONTENTS

PAGE

Hamlet's "To Be or Not to Be" Soliloquy ..... *N. B. Allen* 195

The New Cambridge Shakspere and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (Continued) ..... *S. A. Tannenbaum* 208

Proverbs and *Sententiae* in the Plays of Shakspere (Concluded) ..... *Katherine Lever* 224

Who Is *Silvia?*—and Other Problems in the Greene-Shakspere Relationship, *Thomas H. McNeal* 240

A Letter to Shakspere ..... *Arthur A. Houghton, Jr.* 255

A Review ..... *Tucker Brooke* 256

Published quarterly, in January, April, July, and October, by The Shakespeare Association of America, Inc., 601 West 113th Street, New York.

Subscription rate, $2.00 per year, postpaid. Single copies, fifty cents.

Membership in the Association includes annual subscription.

All correspondence relating to the conduct of the BULLETIN should be addressed to Dr. Samuel A. Tannenbaum, 601 West 113th Street, New York, N. Y.

Other matters relating to the work of the Association should be referred to the Secretary.

Copyright, 1937, by The Shakespeare Association of America, Inc.

HAMLET'S "TO BE OR NOT TO BE" SOLILOQUY

By N. B. ALLEN

THOUGH there have been many interpretations of various lines in Hamlet's "To be or not to be" soliloquy, the passage as a whole has divided scholars into two main groups. One takes the view that Hamlet is meditating on suicide; the other that he is thinking about struggling with the wrongs of life.

The disagreement centers on the word "opposing" in the fifth line of the soliloquy. Hamlet says:

> ". . . to take arms against a sea of troubles
> And by opposing end them. To die; to sleep."

It appears to one group that "opposing" is figurative and means "committing suicide"; and that "To die" is in apposition with "end." The other group believes that "opposing" indicates a literal conflict to end our troubles; and that "To die" follows in Hamlet's thought[1] because death usually comes to one who wages such a conflict. At least, death would be likely to overtake Hamlet, they claim, if he killed his uncle.[2]

Judging merely by the articles which have been written on the meaning of the soliloquy, one might suppose that the "active resistance" interpretation is more widely accepted. It seems certain, however, that a considerable majority of scholars have assumed that Hamlet is speaking of suicide, but have felt that the fact needs no demonstration.[3]

---

[1]Samuel Johnson, the most famous member of this group, observes in his note on the passage that it is "connected rather in the speaker's mind, than on his tongue."

[2]Of course, the two groups differ on the interpretation of the first line of the soliloquy as well, one holding that "To be or not to be" means "To live or to die," the other that it means, "Is my present project of active resistance to wrong to be or not to be?" as Edward Dowden (*Hamlet,* "The Arden Shakespeare" [London, 1899], p. 99) states it. But the words themselves give no clue as to which explanation is correct, and their interpretation, therefore, hinges on the meaning of the later lines.

The first line has also been explained in other ways. Johnson differs from most of those who agree with him about the meaning of the soliloquy as a whole and says that Hamlet here questions whether or not we are to exist after death. George MacDonald (*The Tragedy of Hamlet* [London, 1885], p. 124), regards the words as the close of a preceding train of thought, not to be connected with what follows.

[3]Among those who have said that Hamlet is speaking of suicide, or who have revealed in the course of a discussion of the play that such is their assumption, are the following: William Guthrie, *An Essay upon English Tragedy* (London, 1747?), pp. 25-26; Henry MacKenzie, *The Mirror* (Edinburgh) XCIX (April 18, 1780), 2d American edition (Philadelphia, 1793), II, 205; Edmund Malone, *The Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare* (London, 1790), IX, 286; Thomas Caldecott (ed.),

Hamlet (London, 1832), p. 73; James Russell Lowell, "Shakespeare Once More," *The North American Review,* CVI (1868), p. 667; Gustav Rümelin, *Shakespeare-studien,* 2d edition (Stuttgart, 1874), pp. 105 and 112n.; Rev. Charles E. Moberley (ed.), *Hamlet* (London, 1873), p. 63; Th. Gessner, "Ein Beitrag zum Verstädniss Shakespeares," *Jahrbuch der Deutschen Shakespeare-Gesellschaft* (1885), p. 281; F. J. Furnivall, *The New Shakespeare Society's Transactions, Series* I (1887-1892, pt. III), pp. 48-52; Robert Browning, *ibid.,* p. 48; Franz Servaez, "Hamlet-Probleme," *Magazin für Litteratur,* LXII (1893, p. 396; Richard Löning, *Die Hamlet-Tragödie Shakespeares* (Stuttgart, 1893), p. 151; Herman Tuerck, *Der Geniale Mensch* (1896), translation (London, 1914), p. 110; A. C. Bradley, *Shakespearean Tragedy,* 2d edition (London, 1905), p. 98n.; M. L. Arnold, "'To be or not to be,'—Again," *Poet-Lore,* XXVII (1916), p. 86; Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, *Notes on Shakespeare's Workmanship* (New York, 1917), p. 172; E. E. Stoll, "Hamlet: An Historical and Comparative Study," *Research Publications of the University of Minnesota,* VIII (1919), p. 37; Joseph Quincey Adams, "Commentary" in his edition of *Hamlet* (New York, 1920), II, 251; H. H. Furness, *Letters,* 2 vols. (New York, 1922), II, 257; A. J. A. Waldock, *Hamlet, A Study in Critical Method* (Cambridge, England, 1931), p. 88; Allardye Nicoll, *Studies in Shakespeare* (London, 1931), p. 50; J. Dover Wilson (ed.), *Hamlet* (Cambridge, England, 1936), p. 190; Harley Granville-Barker, *Prefaces to Shakespeare, Third Series* (London, 1937), p. 322.

Such a list, however, gives an inadequate idea of the currency of the suicide interpretation. The very fact that most editors have no note on the meaning of the soliloquy as a whole probably indicates that they do not consider the other explanation worth refuting. Most university professors in America assume that suicide is meant. Professors O. J. Campbell of Columbia, Hardin Craig of Stanford University, T. M. Parrot of Princeton, and George Lyman Kittredge, for example, all consider that there is no doubt that Hamlet is discussing suicide. (Rightly.—Ed.).

In view of the zeal and energy of the minority, who have argued their case most eloquently from the time of Johnson to the present,[4] it is perhaps necessary, before entering on a

[4]Samuel Johnson first excluded the idea of suicide from the opening lines of the soliloquy in a paraphrase of the passage which he included in the notes to his edition of the plays. Some of those who have followed him are: F. W. Ziegler, *Hamlets Charakter nach Psychologischen und Physiologischen Grundsätzen* (Wien, 1803), p. 78; Johann Ludwig Tieck, *Dramaturgische Blätter* (1824), included in *Kritische Schriften* (Leipzig, 1852), III, 282-283; Julius L. Klein, *Berliner Modenspiegel,* XV (1846) No. 24; Hermann Freiherr Von Friesen, *Briefe über Shakspere's Hamlet* (Leipzig, 1864), pp. 234-235; George H. Miles, *A Review of Hamlet Hamlet* (Baltimore, 1870), p. 41; Thomas Tyler, *The Philosophy of "Hamlet"* (London, 1874), pp. 27-28; Karl Werder, *Vorlesungen über Shakespeare's Hamlet* (Berlin, 1875), pp. 38-39; Edward Vining, *The Mystery of Hamlet* (Philadelphia, 1881), p. 51; George MacDonald, *The Tragedy of Hamlet* (London, 1885), p. 124; F. B. Gilchrist, *The True Story of Hamlet and Ophelia* (Boston, 1889), p. 147; Edward Dowden (ed.), *Hamlet,* "The Arden Shakespeare" (London, 1889), p. 99; William B. Wright, "Hamlet," *The Atlantic Monthly,* LXXXIX (1902), pp. 686-595; W. F. Tamblyn, "Hamlet's Soliloquy," *The Nation* (New York), LXXV (1902), p. 265; Charlton M. Lewis, *The Genesis of Hamlet* (New York, 1907), p. 100; Edward B. Bronson, "'To be or not to be?' What was the Question?", *The Outlook,* CVII (1914), pp. 922-925; Gustav Mai-Rodegg, *Hamlet-Entdeckungen Eines Schauspielers* (Berlin, 1917), pp. 61 and 64; Simon A. Blackmore, *The Riddles of Hamlet and the Newest Answers* (Boston, 1917), p. 239; J. M. Murray, "To be or not to be?", *Adelphi,* IV (1926), pp. 341-349; Irving T. Richards, "The Meaning of Hamlet's Soliloquy," *PMLA,* XLVIII (1933), pp. 741-766; Mona Morgan, *Hamlet the Dane* (Philadelphia, 1936), pp. 35-36.

Most of these critics have agreed that the idea of suicide enters the soliloquy in the middle, but Tieck, Von Friesen, MacDonald, Wright, Bronson, and Richards exclude it even here. Richards, who has given the most complete exposition of this point of view, observes (*op. cit.,* pp. 752-753) that whether or no Johnson found any consideration of suicide in the middle of the soliloquy is at least open to question, in view of the generality of the expressions he uses in his paraphrase.

discussion of the soliloquy, to examine their claims, and to show why the arguments which the majority must have perceived are overwhelmingly more convincing. Strange as it seems, this has apparently never been done.

II

1. In the first place, Hamlet is speaking about mankind in general, not about himself. For "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" and "the thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to" do not characterize Hamlet's great worries, his mother's incest and how to avenge his uncle's murder of his father.[5] This universality of expression is in itself a strong indication that suicide and not a struggle against various wrongs is indicated. Hamlet might well end his peculiar troubles by killing his uncle, but the diversified misfortunes which beset the typical man, this "sea of troubles," cannot be ended by opposition in this literal sense. Only when "opposing" is taken in the figurative sense of "committing suicide" can it end such various ills.

Moreover, the expression must be given this figurative sense if the whole line

"And by opposing end them. To die, to sleep"

is to have continuity.[6] Why should death follow opposition? If the struggle indicated were between Hamlet and Claudius, Hamlet might speak of his own death as naturally resulting from his revenge, either at once or later.[7] But it is surely not natural to assume that the typical man is bound (or even likely) to die if he attacks his troubles, especially since "slings and arrows" and a "sea" indicate multifarious minor evils rather than powerful antagonists. If "opposing" means "committing suicide," however, the continuity of the line is at once clear.[8]

---

[5]A few lines farther on it is even clearer that he is referring to *homo sapiens* rather than to himself.

[6]Nearly all critics on both sides of the qestion assume such continuity. For a discussion of the unlikely possibility that the three and a half lines beginning "Whether 'tis nobler" and ending with "And by opposing end them" are parenthetical, see F. J. Furnivall's discussion of the soliloquy (*op. cit.*, pp. 48-50).

[7]Even if this were the case it is doubtful that his own death would occur to Hamlet as being so likely a result as Irving T. Richards thinks. He says (*op. cit.*, pp. 750-751), "(Claudius') death would inevitably have precipitated Hamlet's end."

[8]Critics who exclude suicide from the soliloquy play hide-and-seek with Hamlet's words. When explaining the continuity of line 5 they argue as if Hamlet were speaking of himself. But they recognize that the soliloquy is about mankind when it comes to explaining the universality of the ills mentioned.

2. The word "nobler" in the second line of the soliloquy also supports the suicide explanation. According to dissenting critics, Hamlet is wondering whether it is nobler to combat misfortunes or to give in to them; but if this is his meaning, the answer to the problem is so obvious that the problem itself is not worth proposing. Not only Hamlet but everyone else would assume without question that taking arms in this sense is nobler than suffering.[9] If we accept the suicide interpretation, however, the question has point. For there is some dignity in suffering when suicide is the only way out, and suicide, too, is sometimes thought to be noble, especially in pagan passages like this.[10] Thus, Brutus, run through by his own sword, is called "the noblest Roman of them all."[11]

3. The connection between "end" in line 4 and "to say we end" in line 5 is important. The foce of "to say" in the second of these phrases has not been always observed. Apparently Hamlet is declaring, "The question is whether by opposing we should end our troubles . . . *which is to say* that by a sleep we end them." If so, the first "end" must refer to our death, since all critics agree that the second "end" does so.[12]

4. The line

"When we have shuffled off this mortal coil"

indicates that Hamlet is referring to suicide. According to The New English Dictionary "Shuffle off" in Shakspere's time meant "get rid of or evade (something difficult, arduous, or irksome) in a perfunctory or unsatisfactory manner, . . . dispose of evasively." Now, if we are killed by our adversaries, we may get rid of something difficult, arduous, or irksome, but we do not do so evasively. Only in death by suicide may we be said to evade difficulties.[13]

---

[9]Even if Hamlet were speaking about his revenge, it is clear from his other soliloquies that there could be no question in his mind as to whether or not revenge is nobler than forbearance.

[10]See below, p. 15.

[11]*Julius Caesar,* V, 5, 68.

[12]This explanation indicates, of course, that

"The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to"

is to Hamlet a paraphrase of "a sea of troubles."

[13]Many critics, several of whom are quoted in Furness's *Variorum,* explain "mortal coil" as the body, supposing that Hamlet is thinking of the body as being wound about the soul like a rope. But the commoner explanation is that given in *The New English Dictionary* and by C. T. Onions in *A Shakespeare Glossary* (Oxford, 1922): "bustle and turmoil of this mortal life." This meaning, suggested by many early

critics, is defended by Dowden in his edition of *Hamlet* (London, 1899). He points out that "coil" is used in the sense of "trouble" or "turmoil" several times by Shakspere, in *The Tempest*, I, 2, 207, for instance. And Dowden adds, "He nowhere uses it in the sense of concentric rings, nor does the *New English Dictionary* give an example earlier than 1627. The notion that "mortal coil" means the body encircling the soul may be set aside."

Another reason for accepting the explanation that Dowden defends is that other phrases in the soliloquy express the idea that death is a release from such ills as might be expressed by "bustle" or "turmoil." That is, "shuffle(d) off this mortal coil" is a paraphrase of "end / The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks / that flesh is heir to," and of "take arms against a sea of troubles." (See above, note 12).

It is interesting to note that, though Benjamin Heath (*A Revisal of Shakespeare's Text* [London, 1765], p. 337) is the earliest critic mentioned in the *Variorum* note who construes "mortal coil" as "body," he was anticipated by Voltaire. In his letter, "Sur la Tragédie" (1733?), the latter translates the phrase "enveloppe mortelle."

5. If it were not fear of the after life, asks Hamlet, who would bear the various ills of life

> "When he himself might his quietus make
> With a bare bodkin?"

The majority even of those critics who have excluded the idea of suicide from the earlier part of the soliloquy admit that it enters here. In reply to the stubborn few who will not even make this admission,[14] however, it is perhaps worth while to insist again on the generality of the soliloquy and on the variety of the ills that mankind is represented as suffering. "Quietus" meant to Shakspere "a settling of accounts." If Hamlet were speaking of himself and of his adversary Claudius, "a settling of accounts" with a bare bodkin might very well refer to Hamlet's killing him, but the typical man can settle all the various accounts indicated by

> "the whips and scorns of time,
> Th' oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
> The pangs of dispriz'd love, the law's delay,
> The insolence of office, and the spurns
> That patient merit of th' unworthy takes"

ony by plunging the bodkin into his own bosom.[15]

6. There is further proof to be urged against the few who maintain that even the middle part of the soliloquy contains

---

[14]See above, note 4, second paragraph.

[15]Irving T. Richards (*op. cit.*, p. 754n.) assumes that those who believe that Hamlet is here speaking of suicide must think that "quietus" always meant "death" as it does today and be ignorant of its early legal meaning. Malone, however, shows in his note that he realizes what the word's significance was in Shakspere's time. He supposes it to be used merely figuratively here. And that is the usual supposition. Even Richards does not believe that Hamlet is thinking of paying money to Claudius. He believes that "quietus" is used figuratively to express revenge. Malone and others believe that it is being used figuratively to express *death*. Certainly when we die we are often said to clear all accounts.

no reference to suicide. Hamlet declares that our ignorance about the next world.

> ". . . makes us rather bear those ills we have
> Than *fly* to others that we know not of."

"Fly" here means "flee." It would be strange to say that those who die fighting against their adversaries or who are put to death as a punishment for such action flee their ills. To suicides, on the other hand, the expression is naturally applied.[16]

7. In the Q1 version of *Hamlet* the second, third and fourth lines and the first half of the fifth line of the soliloquy are omitted. The result is that if we consider this version alone it is impossible to find a reference to the conflict against wrong which Johnson and his followers regard as the central thought of the soliloquy.[17] Of course, this does not indicate that the lines ever were absent from the passage as Shakspere wrote it; their omission is due, no doubt, to the reporter.[18] It does, however, indicate that the reporter thought suicide was meant. Now in view of his confused and garbled account of various parts of the play, of many of

---

[16]Those who declare that Hamlet says nothing about suicide make a great deal of the fact that the last six lines of the soliloquy obviously are not concerned with it. See, for instance, F. W. Ziegler (*op. cit.*, p. 80) and others quoted by Richards (*op. cit.*, p. 747n). Hamlet, they insist, could not speak of suicide as an enterprise "of great pith and moment." In making this point, however, they are wasting their labor, for it is generally agreed to. Even the critics whom Ziegler and Richards are opposing recognize that here Hamlet is referring, not to suicide, but to various important plans which we often find ourselves unable to carry out—just as we are unable to carry out our plans for suicide—because we realize or think too long about their possible disadvantages. See A. C. Bradley, *op. cit.*, p. 98n.

It should be observed, however, that even here Hamlet says nothing about his enterprise against the King. Here as elsewhere he is speaking of mankind in general.

[17]Charlton M. Lewis (*op. cit.*, p. 100) makes this observation.

[18]If the omission of these lines in Q1 indicated that Shakspere did not have them in the soliloquy as originally written, this would prove even more conclusively that he meant Hamlet to be speaking of suicide. But it seems likely that the differences between Q1 and Q2 in general are largely due to a reporter. E. K. Chambers (*William Shakespeare, A Study of Facts and Problems*, [Oxford, 1930], I, 412) believes that Q2 "substantially represents the original play as written once and for all by Shakespeare," and that Q1 is "based upon derivatives from that text." Of practically the same opinion are Gustav Tanzer ("The First and Second Quartos and the First Folio of *"Hamlet:* Their Relation to Each Other," *The New Shakespeare Society's Transactions, Part I* [1880-1882], pp. 109-197); H. D. Gray ("The First Quarto of *Hamlet*," *MLR*, X [1915], pp. 171-180); and R. C. Rhodes (*Shakespeare's First Folio* [Oxford, 1923], pp. 72-81. Other authorities do not go so far as this, but nearly all of them agree that most of the differences between Q1 and Q2 are due to mutilation. See Sir Sidney Lee, *A Life of William Shakespeare* (New York, 1916), p. 36; E. E. Stoll, *op. cit.*, Chapter III; Joseph Quincey Adams, *op. cit.*, pp. 335-356; and Harley Granville-Barker, *op. cit.*, pp. 190-202. Granville-Barker cites the Q1 soliloquy as an example of a passage whose difference from the Q2 form is obviously due to mutilation.

the details of this soliloquy, indeed, this man cannot be considered an altogether satisfactory witness—far from it. Nevertheless, it is commonly believed that he saw the play given by Shakspere's own actors; and, though he is often confused about details, his general impressions are elsewhere usually correct.

The omission of the three and a half lines is not the only indication that the person who gave us Q1 thought suicide was the main idea of the soliloquy. His interpolation of a phrase that seems to have been suggested by Hamlet's reference to suicide in his first soliloquy is also significant. That is,

> "And borne before an everlasting Judge"

in Q1 is apparently a reminiscence of

> "Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
> His canon 'gainst self slaughter."[19]

III

It is not surprising for a melancholy character like Hamlet to reveal an interest in the subject of suicide,[20] but it is surprising for him to speak of it as he does in this soliloquy. For most of the passage has no specific connection with Hamlet at all. As has already been observed,[23] he speaks of mankind rather than of himself.

How is such generalizing to be explained? In all his other soliloquies Hamlet is profoundly, even abnormally, engrossed in his own problems, and is specific about these problems, using the first person and speaking of my mother,"[22] "mine uncle,"[23] "this player here,"[24] "my father,"[25] "a father kill'd, a mother stain'd."[26] In this solil-

[19]These lines are omitted from the first soliloquy in Q1.

[20]I. T. Richards (*op. cit.*, p. 758) insists that it is out of keeping with Hamlet's character for him to speak of suicide, and uses this contention as an argument against the suicide interpretation. Many earlier critics, however, have shown that Hamlet is of the "melancholy type" popular in the dramas of the opening years of the seventeenth century and that an interest in suicide is characteristic of that type. See Richard Löning, *op. cit.*, pp. 146-194; E. E. Stoll, "Shakspere, Marston, and the Malcontent Type," *Modern Philology*, III (January, 1906), pp. 1-23; and Levin L. Schücking, *Character Problems in Shakespeare's Plays* (New York, 1922), pp. 153-171).

[21]See above.

[22]I, 2, 140.

[23]I, 2, 151.

[24]II, 2, 577.

[25]II, 2, 624.

[26]IV, 4, 57.

oquy he does not refer to any character in the play. He does not even mention incest, or murder, or revenge.

In other words, Shakspere has here departed from the recognized Elizabethan dramatic principle of revelation in soliloquy.[27] He has chosen to have Hamlet give us a little essay on suicide which contains no thought clearly connected with Hamlet's own interests.[28]

But more important than this is the fact that it contains many thoughts strikingly out of keeping with Hamlet's own background. In speaking of the ills of life Hamlet chooses not merely such illustrations as fit the average man as well as himself; he refers to ills which he as a prince cannot have suffered. "The law's delay" and "the spurns that patient merit of the unworthy takes" are examples.[29]

Equally surprising is the pagan nature of the soliloquy. During the rest of the play Hamlet's speeches, like those of the other characters, are full of Christian ideas. In Act I he speaks of the Everlasting's "canon 'gainst self slaughter"[30] and of the immortality of his own soul.[31] He is told by the ghost not to punish his mother, but to "leave her to heaven;"[32] and it is to avoid sending Claudius there that he spares him when he finds him praying.[33] In the soliloquy, however, he enunciates a philosophy of agnosticism that takes no account of God, and instead of referring to heaven he speaks of

> ". . . something after death,
> The undiscover'd country from whose bourn
> No traveller returns."

---

[27]E. E. Stoll ("Hamlet and Iago," *Anniversary Papers by Colleagues and Pupils of George Lyman Kittredge* [Boston, 1915], p. 261) shows that Shakspere's soliloquies usually have much the same function as prologues and choruses. That is, they are "for information."

[28]See Malone's note on the soliloquy; also Victor Hugo, Introduction to *Oeuvres Complètes de Shakespeare* (Paris, 1873), p. 97; Lorenz Morsbach, *Der Weg zu Shakespeare und das Hamletdrama. Eine Umkehr* (Halle a. S., 1922), p. 91; George Brandes, *William Shakespeare* (1 vol., London, 1926), p. 365; J. Dover Wilson, *What Happens in Hamlet* (New York, 1935), p. 127.

[29]Samuel Johnson has carefully observed in his note on the Soliloquy that in his enumeration of miseries Hamlet "forgets, whether properly or not, that he is a prince, and mentions many evils to which inferior stations are exposed."

[30]1, 2, 132.

[31]1, 4, 66-67:

> "And for my soul, what can it do to that
> Being a thing immortal as itself?"

[32]1, 5, 86.

[33]III, 3, 77-78.

[34]*Shakespeare Restored* (London, 1726), p. 83.

It is this part of the soliloquy which has caused most discussion; for Hamlet himself has recently (in I, 5) talked with a returned traveler, the ghost of his father. The lines are no more consistent with Hamlet's character than is the rest of the soliloquy, but the striking nature of the contradiction they contain has caused many critics to try to explain them. The casuistry of their arguments indicates how impossible their task is. Theobald[34] tries to abolish the difficulty by showing that the Ghost comes only from purgatory, not from the last and eternal residence of souls. Farmer[35] insists that the Ghost is not a traveller to Hamlet, since in Shakspere's time the idea of a traveller was of a person who gave an account of his adventures. J. M. Robertson[36] is able to make sense out of the passage only by supposing that it is misplaced and "properly would come before the ghost scene." J. M. Murray[37] is forced to assume that Hamlet has forgotten the Ghost, though Hamlet has shown that he remembers it in his second soliloquy,[38] and though he is to refer to it again before its second appearance to him.[39] Such critics fail to notice that the lines in question are out of harmony with the play simply because they are in harmony with the pagan nature of the whole soliloquy.[40]

These inconsistencies and contradictions, which set the soliloquy off from the rest of *Hamlet,* have been especially noted by the Shakspere skeptics. As early as 1866 Gustav

---

[35]Farmer's note is in the Johnson and Steevens edition of Shakspere (London, 1773), vol. X, appendix II.

[36]*The Problem of Hamlet* (London, 1917), p. 55.

[37]"To be or not to be?" *Adelphi,* IV (December, 1926), p. 345. J. Dover Wilson (*What Happens in Hamlet* [New York, 1935], p. 74) says that Hamlet has either forgotten about the Ghost, or "for the time at any rate given up the idea that it may have been his father's spirit."

Schücking (*op. cit.,* pp. 117-118) quotes the explanations of the lines which several of the German critics give: G. G. Gervinus (*Shakespeare,* 3te Auflage [Leipzig, 1862], III, 314), defends Hamlet against inconsistency by claiming that Shakspere's ghosts are not real ghosts, but only the visibly embodied figments of a strong imagination. F. T. Vischer (*Kritische Gänge,* Neue Folge [Stuttgart, 1861], I, 136) insists that Hamlet forgets the Ghost, such a lapse of memory being due to an instinctive dread of allowing his mind to dwell on that undiscovered country. Kuno Fischer *Shakespeares Hamlet* (Heidelberg, 1896), pp. 134 ff.) declares that Hamlet is right in his statement, because only the spirit of Hamlet's father has returned, not his body. Schücking observes that these "fantastical and abstruse speculations" are "almost humiliating."

[38]II, 2, 627-628.

[39]III, 297-298.

[40]J. Dover Wilson (*What Happens in Hamlet,* Appendix B) devotes several pages to the question whether Ophelia's funeral ceremonies are Anglican or Catholic, but says nothing about the religious philosophy of the soliloquy.

Rümelin[41] summarized them in a footnote and decided that "in the soliloquy it is the poet that is speaking." E. E. Stoll expressed the same idea, that Hamlet has been forgotten[42] and that Shakspere is speaking in his own person.[43]

As far as it goes this explanation is satisfactory. It explains both the difficulties discussed above: the inconsistency of the religious philosophy of the soliloquy with that of Hamlet's speeches elsewhere in the play, and the fact that the ills referred to are such as a man of the middle classes rather than a prince might suffer. It does not, however, go far enough. It does not explain *why* Shakspere forgot Hamlet while writing the soliloquy.[44] Shakspere usually put himself imaginatively into the places of his characters when writing their speeches. Why did he so completely fail to do so here?

The only satisfactory answer is that Shakspere wrote the soliloquy, not for *Hamlet,* but as a separate lyrical unit. Then while writing or revising the play he decided to insert[45] it, since it fitted Hamlet's mood even though it was inconsistent with details of his character.

To make an insertion in a play was not extraordinary

---

[41]*Shakespearestudien,* 2d edition (Stuttgart, 1874), p. 111n. Rümelin's original words were: "Offenbar spricht im Monologe . . . der Dichter selbst."

[42]"Hamlet and Iago," *Anniversary Papers by Colleagues and Pupils of George Lyman Kittredge* (Boston, 1913), p. 270.

[43]"Hamlet: An Historical and Comparative Study," *Research Publications of the University of Minnesota,* VIII (1919), p. 35.

[44]Rümelin (*op. cit.,* pp. 103-112) explains very satisfactorily why the soliloquy sounds like Shakspere, but not why it sounds like Hamlet. He believes that Shakspere used Hamlet to give poetical expression to his own views of life; and that Hamlet's speech of self characterization to Rosencranz and Guildenstern (II, 2, 306-324), his advice to the players (III, 2, 1-50), his philosophy in the graveyard (V, I, 83-121), and the famous soliloquy all sound like Shakspere himself. But, except for the soliloquy, these passages are not out of harmony with Hamlet's character. In none of them does Hamlet speak as if he were not a prince and a Christian—as he does in the soliloquy. And his failure to refer to his own peculiar problems in these other passages is not surprising either; for they are not soliloquies, and he is not free in them to unburden his heart.

As for Stoll, he does not support his statement. Certainly the soliloquy is not to be explained as Stoll explains other passages whose inconsistencies can be shown to have a dramatic purpose. Hamlet's self-abasing statements that he is a coward (II, 2, 604; and IV, 4, 44), for instance, are said by Stoll ("Hamlet and Iago," p. 264) to be in contradiction to his character as revealed in action, but they are necessary, he explains, because Shakspere can't let Hamlet stop the play by killing Claudius at once, and some reason must be given for his failure to do so. The contradictions in this soliloquy have no such excuse.

[45]Schücking (*op. cit.,* p. 96) calls certain passages which are not altogether in character "inserted episodes." Though his discussion shows that he does not think of these passages as having been conceived separately from their plays, some of the ones he treats seem to have had such an origin.

in Shakspere's time. Ben Jonson made several in Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy,* for instance; and it is generally believed by critics that the speeches of Hecate in *Macbeth* were inserted by Middleton.[46] Of course, the Hecate speeches may have been put in after Shakspere's retirement or death, but Shakspere shows that the idea of an insertion was not foreign to him by representing Hamlet as making one in *The Murder of Gonzago.*[47] Most important, there is textual evidence of insertions by Shakspere himself in his own plays. The most striking examples are Theseus' speech about the lunatic, the lover, and the poet from *A Midsummer-Night's Dream,* V, 1, and Mercutio's Queen Mab speech from *Romeo and Juliet,* I, 4, both of which indicate by the mislining of their verse in the quarto editions[48] that they were inserted in the margins of their manuscripts.[49]

---

[46]See E. K. Chambers, *op. cit.,* I, 472-473.

[47]*Hamlet,* II, 2, 568.

[48]Mercutio's speech is printed as blank verse in Q1 of *Romeo and Juliet,* but that is explained by its having been taken down by a reporter. The mislining occurs in the Fisher Quarto of 1600, which was evidently printed from manuscript.

[49]See the note on Theseus' speech in the edition of *A Midsummer-Night's Dream,* by J. Dover Wilson and Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch (Cambridge, England, 1924), pp. 80-86; and J. Dover Wilson and A. W. Pollard, "The 'Stolne and Surreptitious' Shakesperian Texts. 'Romeo and Juliet,' 1597," *Times Literary Supplement,* August 15, 1919, p. 434.

The supposition is that when Shakspere added these passages to the margins of the manuscripts he had to break up the blank verse because of lack of room, with the result that the typesetters could not follow it. The one who set up Mercutio's speech was so confused that he gave up trying to solve the problem and arranged the passage like prose. The one who set up Theseus' speech tried to reform the lines of blank verse, but failed.

Apparently the inserted portion of the latter passage begins with ":Lovers and madmen" of line 4 of the scene and ends with "And a name" in line 16. It is true that lines 4, 8, 9, and 10 are not mislined, but this is most likely due to chance. Wilson assumes that only the mislined lines were added and that before the insertion the speech consisted of lines 2-4, 8-10, and from "Such" in line 16 to the end. But line 8 does not follow line 4 naturally. The order in which the madman and the lover are treated in lines 8-10 and the fact that the words are singular and not plural make it almost certain that line 8 was written to follow line 7 and that the inserted material was therefore in a solid block. (The numbering of the lines referred to above follows the Fisher Quarto, not modern editions.)

In discussing Mercutio's speech, G. Hjort ("The Good and the Bad Quartos of *Romeo and Juliet,*" *MLR* XXI [1926] pp. 140-146) advances the theory that the prose form of the passage may result from this part of the play's having been set up from a corrected page of Q1, the pirated quarto. She thinks that it was the corrections of the errors in Q1 that made the blank verse too difficult for the printer. This theory does not explain the errorless lineation of Mercutio's last three lines, which, according to Wilson's and Pollard's theory, are not part of the insertion. If corrections of Q1 caused the body of the speech to be printed as prose, these lines should be so printed, too, for they are as different from Q1 as is the rest. The explanation of B. A. P. van Dam ("Did Shakespeare Revise *Romeo and Juliet?*" *Anglia,* LI [1927] p. 59) is no more satisfactory than that of Hjort. Like Hjort, van Dam believes that the speech was set up from a corrected page of Q1, but he assumes that it was first set up as blank verse. After having proceeded some distance farther, however, the printer discovered that he had overlooked the three lines

omitted from Q1 and added from the prompt copy to the margin. The lines van Dam refers to begin, "Her Chariot is an emptie Hazel nut." In order to avoid shifting all he had set up subsequent to the speech, the printer made room for the three last lines by changing the blank verse part of the passage to prose, van Dam thinks. The difficulty with this explanation is that the part of the speech in question has thirty-five lines when set up as blank verse, and only twenty-six after the verse has been changed to prose and the three lines inserted.

Of course, one would not expect Shakspere to insert the soliloquy in a part with which it is so out of keeping as it is with Hamlet's. But the hypothesis that he did so is far more probable than that he wrote it expressly for Hamlet. The former procedure would at least have the advantage of economy—of making use of an effective bit of writing already produced. The latter would have none. The situation may be compared to that of a well-dressed man with a patch on his clothes. One may be unwilling to think that the gentleman would patch his clothes, but it is more natural to suppose that he did so than that he originally planned them with the patch included. Moreover, it is significant that the passage which Shakspere inserted in *Romeo and Juliet* is likewise out of keeping with Mercutio's character.[50]

If Shakspere did insert the soliloquy already written, he must have realized that it was inconsistent with Hamlet's character. It seems almost certain that he sought to lessen the force of this inconsistency by representing the soliloquy as Hamlet's comment on a book. In Q1 he enters, as the King says, "poring vppon a booke,"[51] and, though a re-

[50]Schücking (*op. cit.*, pp. 98-99) says of this passage, "Does this kind of language harmonize with Mercutio's character? He is conceived as a contrast to the soft, sentimental Romeo, infinitely more matter-of-fact than he, experienced and averse to all sentiment and reverie, despising all tenderness and gentle feeling . . . His straightforwardness and honesty are expressed in a natural bluntness which in his well-meant jokes takes the form of indelicate and obscene language. . . . With all these faults he is a manly and dauntless character who betrays no weakness even in the face of the death which he knows his own love of fighting has brought upon him. But we cannot possibly believe that this character . . . should have so fine an understanding of the wonderful grace and delicacy of the Fairy Queen as is shown in this celebrated description. . . . From the lips of a Fairy Queen or an Ariel such delicate and dreamlike music of language sounds natural, but we refuse to accept it as genuine from the mouth of a bully like Mercutio."

[51]It is possible that Shakspere had a definite book in mind. Several of the ideas in the soliloquy seem to have been suggested by the *De Consolatione* of Girolamo Cardano, a book which had been translated into English in 1573 as *Cardanus Comforte.* Resemblances between the soliloquy and this book were noted nearly a century ago by Francis Douce (*Illustrations of Shakespeare* [London, 1839], II, 238), and somewhat later Joseph Hunter (*New Illustrations of Shakespeare* [London, 1845], II, 243) declared that Hamlet's thoughts in the soliloquy were so similar to Cardan's that the latter's book was likely the one which Shakspere placed in the hands of Hamlet. But the uninterested observation of the editors of the Clarendon Press edition of *Hamlet* that "these resemblances to Cardan are not very striking" apparently

arrangement of scenes in Q2 separates the King's statement from the soliloquy,[52] it is well to remember that, as Stoll says,[53] "reading, . . . not the fullness of heart . . . was the original motive or occasion of his discourse."

IV

A careful inspection of Hamlet's famous soliloquy, then, proves beyond much possibility of doubt that it is concerned with suicide. This has been shown in sections I and II above. Next it has been shown that the soliloquy, while in keeping with Hamlet's mood, is out of harmony with what we know of him as he is represented elsewhere in the play. Finally the suggestion has been made that this lack of harmony may well be due to the passage's having been a separate lyrical unit which Shakspere inserted into *Hamlet* in the same way that he inserted passages into others of his plays.

---

caused modern critics to ignore Hunter's theory. Recently, however, Hardin Craig ("Hamlet's Book," *Huntington Library Bulletin,* VI [November, 1934], pp. 17-37) showed that there is much more of Cardan in Hamlet's soliloquy than even Hunter realized. Craig proved that the soliloquy is like Cardan, not only in its comparison of death to a sleep, to which Douce and Hunter had called attention, but in its reference to "the undiscovered country" and in the ideas contained in the lines beginning, "Thus conscience doth make cowards of us all."

[52]Most critics believe that this is one of the few differences between the quartos which represent changes by Shakspere. See Stoll, "Hamlet: An Historical and Comparative Study," pp. 20-25; and Chambers, *op. cit.,* I, 417.

[53]*Op. cit.,* p. 36. This and other statements by Professor Stoll almost seem to indicate that he may have intended to imply what has been suggested above, that the soliloquy was not originally written for the play. He discusses it, however, in connection with other passages which, though somewhat out of character, could not have been written separately from the plays in which they occur. Most important, he explains the generality of Hamlet's soliloquy by the dramatic necessity of keeeping Claudius in the dark about his aims *op. cit.,* pp. 34-35). In refutation of this explanation it might be pointed out that if that had been Shakspere's problem he could have solved it much more simply by arranging to have Hamlet speak his thoughts when alone, as he does in I, 2. Stoll here is falling into the error of oversubtlety with which he taxes other critics.

University of Delaware,
Newark, Del.

THE NEW CAMBRIDGE SHAKSPERE AND *THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA*

[*Continued*]

By SAMUEL A. TANNENBAUM

V.

IN his commentary ("Notes") on the play W lays the basis for his theoretical notions about the origin and history of the printer's "copy" for F's text of this play. We shall, therefore, give these notes careful consideration. It will also be of interest to see whether the recent "many discoveries" and the use of the Oxford dictionary—which W and Q said justified them in "auspicating" a new text of the plays and poems—have contributed anything of value for "the ordinary lover of Shakespeare" for whom this edition is alleged to have been designed.

> I, i, 22, and III, i, 120.—"How young Leander crossed the Hellespont;" . . . "a ladder quaintly made of cords . . . Would serve to scale another Hero's tower."—"These references to Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* . . . have been taken by some as proof that [this play] belongs to a later date [than 1593]. All they indicate, however, is that Shakespeare must have seen the poem in MS., a likely thing enough since there is a high probability that the two dramatists were working together at some period before 1593."

There is nothing in Shakspere's text to justify the statement that the poet was referring to Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*. As Rolfe says, "The story [of Hero and Leander] was doubtless familiar to the poet from his schooldays." Dr. W. H. D. Rouse, the editor of *Shakespeare's Ovid,* writing in 1904, says, "It is clear that he [Shakspere] knew Ovid in the original"—an opinion which is abundantly borne out by modern scholarly research. That Shakspere was not influenced by Marlowe's version of the story may be inferred from the fact that he introduced an important and striking detail which is not to be found either in Marlowe, Ovid, or Musæus: Shakspere's hero uses a ladder to climb Hero's tower; theirs does not need to do so because the amorous lady comes down to the seashore to greet her lover or opens the door for him. (The tower is introduced only for the sake of the light which is to guide Leander to the lady's bed.) Even the general reader must be edified by the logic which finds that *it is likely* that Shakspere *must have* seen the poem in manuscript because of the *high*

probability that Marlowe and Shakspere had been working together—logic with which anything can be proved.

I, i, 42-43.—"Yet writers say; As in the sweetest bud
The eating canker dwells, so eating love
Inhabits in the finest wits of all."

W's note on this passage tells the reader only that F has a semicolon after "dwels"; of course, the reader infers from this (and similar notes in other parts of the book) that the matter is of importance and that it has something to do with "dramatic pointing" and the "players' parts" which furnished F's text. W begins his "Notes" (page 83) with the statement, "All significant departures from the Folio, including important emendations, are recorded." But the statement is not true; all significant departures from F are not recorded. Furthermore, of the few, very few, references to departures from F's punctuation most have no significance whatsoever. In the verses heading this paragraph the semicolon has no possible dramatic or grammatical significance; combined with the semicolon after "say" (augmented by W's—not F's—capital A in "As") it may mean that Proteus is having one of his asthmatic attacks. It may be noted that W silently omits a comma after "bud."

I, i, 54.—"Geography," says W, "was not Shakespeare's strong point, but the confusion [about the method of journeying from Verona to Milan] may well have been aggravated by the abridger." If Shakspere was careless about the physiography of the countries in his stories—and we know he was—there is no reason for invoking a blundering abridger. A much more likely explanation for the geographical inconsistencies (Verona, Milan, Padua, Mantua) —if explanation is needed for the geography of a fairy tale— would be furnished by the assumption that in revising his play Shakspere had not finally decided on the location of the different incidents. He had sense enough to consult a map when he thought it necessary to do so.

I, i, 78.—Speed says, "Why then my horns are his [Valentine's] horns, whether I wake or sleep." W, who otherwise is so sensitive to sexual allusions in Shakspere (finding them even where there are none), finds the point of this jest "obscure." It should be almost needless to say that Speed, who may be a married man and lacking in a great regard for women (he calls Julia a "laced mutton"), says merely that if he belongs to Valentine his cuckoldy horns

are also Valentine's, no matter what he (Speed) may do about it.

I, 1, 92.—To W it seems "remarkable" that Proteus should have sent Valentine's servant with a letter to Julia; but surely there is nothing unusual in two such intimate friends employing each other's servants occasionally.

In W's opinion, Speed—whom he calls "a poor stick, without character, [who] has not a single witty thing to say . . . may be the creation or re-creation of the adapter" (p. 82). Most readers of Shakspere will not agree with W's estimate of Speed, "notable as a verbal wit and quibbler" (Dowden), nor would his creator. "Beshrew me, but you have a quick wit," says Proteus (I, i, 121). Speed, a foil or mate to Launce, is an integral portion of the play and cannot possibly be eliminated from it, as is sufficiently evident from II, i (the scene with Valentine), II, v (the scene with Launce), and especially III, i, 277-375. To be convinced that Speed is Shakspere's creation one need only read his description of Valentine in love (II, i, 17-30).

I, i, 108-110.—This famous crux is printed thus in W's text:

> "*Proteus.* But what said she? [*Speed nods*] Nod?
> *Speed.* Ay.
> *Proteus.* Nod-ay, why that's noddy."

Comparison with F shows that W has added to Proteus's speech the stage-direction, the word "Nod" and the question mark. Emendation is really unnecessary. When Proteus inquires about what Julia said, Speed shakes his head negatively (from side to side); Proteus imitates him with an inquiring look (as if he were saying "Is this what she did?"), and Speed, nodding, says "Ay;" This explanation, originally suggested by Dr. Nicholson, is borne out by Speed's similar behavior (nodding in answer to a question) in line 138 ("What said she?—Nothing)"). Proteus could not have said "Nod?" after he had asked "what said she?"

I, i, 119-120.—W finds a quibble in "nothing" and "noddy", but this is more than doubtful: "nothing" was probably pronounced "Note-ing."

I, i, 141.—W, in common with all other editors since the publication of the second Folio, correctly reads "testerned" for F's "cestern'd" in Speed's parting shot at Proteus, but he spoils it by telling his readers that "cestern'd" stands for "cisterned," and couples this information with an ex-

clamation mark. Surely he does not mean to favor the adoption of "cistern'd" (enclosed in a cistern)! Proteus, punning as usual, says "testern'd me" (given me a testern) and alludes to having been quizzed (tested) by Proteus; that is why he adds, "In requital whereof, henceforth, carry your letters your selfe." "Cestern'd" is an easy misreading of "testern'd" because of the close similarity between minuscular and majuscular *c* and *t* in Elizabethan secretary script.

I, ii, 12.—W is of the opinion that the name "Mercatio" (one of Julia's wooers) is a misprint for "Mercutio." It might, of course, also be a misreading because of the similarity between *a* and *u*, but it is far more likely that "Mercatio" (suggesting the Latin word for "Merchant") is what Shakspere intended to call the "rich" man of whose "wealth" Lucetta approved.

I, ii, 50.—W points out that F reads *Exit* at the end of this line, and he refers the reader to page 78, where he says that, except at the ends of scenes, F has exits only "at four places where it would be obvious to a compositor or copyist of average intelligence that the context demands one." But Lucetta's exit is by no means obvious, notwithstanding Julia's saying to her "Will you be gone?" Furthermore, neither a copyist nor a compositor would take the liberty to add a stage-direction, especially if the copyist were transcribing players' parts which contained so few stage-directions.

I, ii, 69-70.—W points out the quibble between "meat" and "maid," but he should also have informed the general reader that the word "meat" was generally used, as here, in the sense of "food."

I, ii, 82.—W does not explain what is meant by the tune of "Light o' love" and that, as Chappell says, it was strictly "a ballet, to be sung and danced." The general reader would also, undoubtedly, appreciate having all the double entendres ("base," "burden," "bauble") in this scene called to his attention and elucidated.

I, ii, 131.—Upon the mention of Julia's father (who does not appear in the play), W waxes sentimental and tells us that Julia "appears to be an orphan. The death of a father would add pathos to her figure; his character and the reference to his decease, which perhaps occurred in 2, 2, have,

probably, been cut by the abridger." In the following scene Antonio mentions a brother who does not appear in the play; this causes W to surmise "Another mysterious character, who possibly figured in the original." Neither of these persons is needed in the play; Shakspere menitoned them only to make the conversation seem lifelike; there is no more reason for suspecting their participation in this comedy than for thinking that Don Alphonso and his retinue (mentioned in V, i, 3) were characters in the original version of the *Two Gentlemen* or that Marcus Luccicos played a part in *Othello.*

I, iii, 1.—The name "Panthino" occurs once in the text of this play (I, iii, 1), once in a scene-heading (I, iii), once as "Panthmo" (in I, iii, 76, and three times as "Panthion" (in two scene-headings and in the list of characters at the end of the play). To W this "suggests that 'Panthino' was the spelling in Antonio's 'part,' while 'Panthion' was that of the 'plot' material." But there is another and much more likely explanation: when Shakspere was writing the text he wrote out the name in full—"Panthino"—but failed (after his custom) to dot the *i;* when he or his copyist was adding the scene-headings he tended to write "Panthîo" with a tilde over the *i*—a common Elizabethan practice—and a little terminal flourish on the *o*); the compositor, not knowing the name, mistook this for "Panthion." From the scene heading of I, iii, we may conclude that in the "plot material," too, the name was "Panthino."

I, iii, 24.—Though W considers "whether" "a Shakespearian spelling," he modernizes it to "whither." "Whether" was a common Elizabethan spelling and pronunciation (as is proved by the frequent contraction of the word to "where") and ought to be retained, especially if it was "a Shakespearian spelling."

I, iii, 27.—From the fact that Silvia's father is only "three" (realy four) times referred to as the "duke" in the text of the play (and always so in the scene-headings and speech prefixes) and six times as the "emperor," W concludes that to Shakspere he was the "emperor" bu to the theatre and the abridger he was the "duke." But the fact probably is that Shakspere thought of him differently on different days. We know that he was careless about such details. In the *Hamlet* of 1603 the principal characters in the *"Dumbe Show"* are a King and a Queen, but when they

become speakers (14 lines lower down on the page) they become a *"Duke"* and a *"Dutchesse,"* and their speeches are so labeled; Hamlet speaks of this king as a Duke in line 249 (*"Alburtus* was the Duke's name") and as a King in line 254 (in the same speech!). In the *Hamlet* of 1604 we again have *"a King and a Queene"* in the *"Dumbe shew,"* and they remain such when they enter at line 164, and their speeches are assigned to *"King"* and *"Quee"*; Hamlet, in his speech to his uncle (lines 247-254), refers to the same person as "Duke" in line 248 and as "King" in line 254. Scholars, notably Walker and Elze (cited by Dowden, page 122 of his edition of *Hamlet*), have pointed out that "Duke" and "King" are not always differentiated by Elizabethan writers. Furness cites W. S. Walker, who "shows by many instances that *king, duke,* and *count* were confounded in sense, and that to the poet they were one and the same." And it might be of significance to note that, as Mr. Lettsom has pointed out (in his edition of Walker's *A Critical Examination,* vol. 2, p. 281) that in *Two Gentlemen* "The emperor is peculiar to the scenes laid at Verona, the duke to those laid at [or near] Milan." There is no reason, then, for invoking an adapter who would meddle with a matter of no consequence to an Elizabethan reader or auditor. The speech prefixes probably assign the emperor's speeches to a duke because he is called *"Duke"* in the list of the *"Actors"* which appears at the end of the play. And, finally, all writers are sometimes inconsistent about minor details of infrequent occurrence.

I, iii, 45-50.—"Sweet love, sweet lines, sweet life— . . . O heavenly Julia. . . ." To W the "broken lines at the beginning and end of this speech [by Proteus] suggest abridgement." Of course, this is the merest assumption on W's part; short lines—especially when they are in the nature of exclamations—as these are—occur frequently in Shakspere and his contemporaries. (See E. A. Abbott's *A Shakespearian Grammar,* 1905, section 511). It may also be pointed out that the text does not bear out W's guess that "comments by Antonio and Panthino" may have been deleted. There is no feeling of a break in the thought or the action either before or after Proteus's speech.

II, i, 3.—The poor quibble on "one" and "on" causes W to say that "the two words were commonly spelt alike in

the 16th century." It would have been more to the point to say that they were often *pronounced* laike.

II, i, 32; IV, i, 3.—One of the most deeply-rooted obsessions guiding the pens of "Q" and W in the editing of this play is the "hypothesis" that *The Two Gentlemen* is what it is because of the stupid meddling of an imaginary adapter or abridger. In support of this notion W more than once refers to the occurrence of the word "ye" in this text. On page 97 he has this comment: "We fancy that the form 'ye' may have been a favorite of the adapter. Bartlett gives more instances of its use in this text than in any other." Of course, the trusting reader infers from this—as he is expected to do—that in this play the word "ye" occurs so much more frequently than in any other of Shakspere's plays that the difference must be significant, so significant as to suggest the hand of a collaborator. It is noteworthy that W does not tell his readers how many times the word 'ye' occurs in *The Two Gentlemen* and in Shakspere's other works. Possibly he did not investigate the matter. Had he done so—as a scholar accustomed to seeking for truth by scientific method should have done—he would have discovered that John Bartlett's *Complete Concordance* is a very incomplete piece of work and errs in two directions: (1) it does not list all the plays in which the word "ye" occurs; (2) its count is incorrect (or incomplete) in every one of the plays it does list. In *The Tempest* we have counted 4 occurrences of "ye" (Bartlett lists only 3); in *The Merchant of Venice,* 4 (Bartlett, 1); in *As You Like It,* 3 (Bartlett, 1); in *A Winter's Tale,* 2 (Bartlett, 1); in *2 Henry IV,* 6 (Bartlett, 1); in *1 Henry VI,* 22 (Bartlett, 4); *in 2 Henry VI,* 19 (Bartlett, 4); in *3 Henry VI,* 8 (Bartlett, 3); in *Richard III,* 3 (Bartlett,1); in *Henry VIII,* 60! (Bartlett, 3); in *Julius Caesar,* 9 (Bartlett, 1); in *Macbeth,* 3 (Bartlett, 2); in *Antony & Cleopatra,* 2 (Bartlett 1); in *The Two Gentlemen,* 6 (Bartlett, 5). In these fourteen plays—all that are listed by Bartlett—the *Concordance* erroneously credits *The Two Gentlemen* with "ye" five times, one more than *1 Henry VI*—surely too small a difference to justify W's "fancy"! And when we consider that in some of the plays of unquestionable Shaksperian authorship "ye" occurs much more frequently than in *The Two Gentlemen* (30 times in *1 Henry IV*—not listed by Bartlett) we must

conclude that W's argument for an adapter—to put it very mildly—leaves something to be desired.

In Shakspere's other plays, we find—on a cursory examination—"ye" in *Love's Labors Lost* thrice, in *Othello* twice, in *Coriolanus* 7 times, in *All's Well* thrice, in *King John* once, in *Measure for Measure* once, in *The Merry Wives* once, in *Romeo & Juliet* 9 times, in *The Taming* thrice, in *Twelfth Night* thrice, in *Troilus & Cressida* 5 times, in *Timon* 9 times, in *The Comedy of Errors* and *Much Ado* not at all, in *Cymbeline* 5 times, in *King Lear* 4 times, in *Hamlet* (the Folio text) 11 times, in *Titus Andronicus* 19 times, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* once, in *Henry V* twice, in *Richard II* twice, in *Pericles* 3 times, in *The Two Noble Kinsmen* (in Rolfe's expurgated text) 45 times. We fancy that our readers will concur with us in the opinion that the sixfold occurrence of "ye" in *The Two Gentlemen* points to Shakspere's unassisted authorship of the play rather than to the botching of an adapter.*

II, i, 146-147, 149-150.—Though W promises to record in his Notes "all significant departures from the Folio," he has no comment on the fact that he prints as prose Speed's speech ("What need she, . . . perceive the jest") which F prints as three lines of verse. The point is noteworthy only because he prints Speed's next prose speech (lines 149-150) as verse, just as F does. These inconsistencies are as inexplicable as significant.

II, ii, 1-2.—W calls these lines prose and attributes them to his imaginary abridger. In this he is in error; the lines are the kind of trimeters which occur frequently in our poet, and may be scanned thus:

"Have pa/tience, gen/tle Jul/ia!"
"I must, / where is / no rem'/dy."

That an abridger had nothing to do with this scene is sufficiently evident from the presence at the end of the scene of two wholly unnecessary speeches, one involving the entry of Panthino.

---

*Incidentally, it may be pointed out that the large number of *ye*'s in *Henry VIII* and in *The Two Noble Kinsmen* confirm the generally-accepted view that John Fletcher had a hand in the composition of these plays. Fletcher's *Rule a Wife and Have a Wife* presents us with 202 occurrences of "ye"; *The Loyal Subject* with 345; *Monsieur Thomas* with 327. It is undoubtedly significant that in *The Maid's Tragedy*, a play almost wholly the work of Fracis Beaumont, "ye" occurs only 6 times. Inasmuch as we can't pursue this subject any further at this time, we refer the reader to E. H. C. Oliphant's book, *The Plays of Beaumont & Fletcher* (1927), pp. 45-46, for some comments on Fletcher's addiction to the word "ye". In *The False One*, a much debated play, "ye" occurs 97 times.

II, iii, 6.—After Julia has given Proteus her ring, Proteus, giving her his, says (according to F):

> "Why then wee'll make exchange;
> Here, take you this."

W prints this speech as one verse and attributes F's arrangement to the abridger. Inasmuch as we have here perfect continuity of thought, there surely is no need for the assumption of abridgement. The peculiar printing is explicable on the theory that the scribe left room for a stage-direction [*"he gives her a ring"*] in the right margin after the word "exchange"—a phenomenon which appears several times in Thomas Middleton's manuscript of *A Game at Chesse.*

II, iii, 27.—W, following Theobald, reads "a wood woman," "wood" meaning "mad"; but this is one of Theobald's unhappy emendations, inasmuch as it does not throw light on F's printing "a would-woman." (It must be remembered that in Shakspere's day the *l* was sounded in the words "would," "could," etc.) The correct reading, as Collier suggested, is unquestionably "a wild woman" ("wild" meaning "frantic"); the letters *i, o* and *e* were constantly mistaken for one another.

II, iii, 28.—One of W's most preposterous notes is his comment on the words "up and down" in Launce's description of the odor of his shoes: "here's my mother's breath up and down." W comments: "Perhaps in reference to the lace of the shoe." Reference to the *N.E.D.* would have shown him that "up and down" meant "exactly."

II, iv, 36.—Because this line ("Yourself, sweet lady, for you gave the fire") consists of five feet and is printed as a line of verse in F, W finds in it "strong evidence that the prose section [of this scene] was originally in verse." Nothing could be further from the truth. W does not inform his readers that F prints also the two succeeding lines (undoubted prose) as verse and that it offends similarly throughout this play and in other plays. Everywhere in Shakspere's prose, even in the speeches of the clowns, it is possible to find lines which are divisible into iambic pentameters; if these happen to make a separate line in the manuscript, the compositor is likely to set them up as lines of verse. Surely, no one would consider Valentine's line, "for it appears by their bare liveries" (II, iv, 43), a line of verse because it reads like an iambic pentameter and is printed as a line of verse in F.

II, iv, 7.—Following Clark and Wright, W gives Speed an exit after line 7 but complains that no motive for the exit has been provided by the text "which had perhaps been tampered with by the adapter at this point in order to give Speed an entry." Had an adapter thought it necessary to introduce Speed here—his absence would not be missed by anyone—he would in all probability have provided for his exit. The absence of a motive for a character's exit from a scene is not unknown in Shakspere's early work and in the work of his contemporaries. There is a very striking instance of it in *Richard II* in John of Gaunt's inexcusable exit at I, i, 195.

II, iv, 59.—"You know him well?" asks the Duke in a line having only two accents. In accord with his usual custom, W calls this a "broken line." Obviously, every reader of this play sees and need not be told that the line is short. W must, therefore, have something significant in mind when he goes to the pains of calling attention to it; but he does not say what he means. The words "broken line" seem to suggest that violence was done to Shakspere's full-length verse by an abridger or adapter. The mystery is heightened by the fact that W passes many of these short lines by without comment. It might possibly be of interest to know why the words "Hath he not a son?" (II, iv, 56) are not noted as a broken line. If W is guided by any principle in this, the fact is not apparent. Such short lines, metrical and non-metrical, occur in the work of all Elizabethan dramatists, probably for variety of rhythm and life-likeness in the dialogue. Typical instances of this technical device may be seen in *Tamburlaine*.

II, iv, 69-70.—F reads "far behinde his worth / Comes all the praises that I now bestow." W, in harmony with one of his most fixed obsessions, considers this an example of "compositor's grammar" and adopts Rowe's "Come." There is no iota of warrant for attributing all such solecisms to the various compositors employed in setting up the Folio. In the first place, it must be borne in mind that a quasi-singular verb with a succeeding plural subject appears in the writings of all Elizabethans. (I may add that this seems to be especially frequent with the verb "Come.") In the second place, all the Folio editors of the seventeenth century retained "Comes," good evidence that they saw

nothing glaringly wrong in it. In the third place, if "Comes" is an error, the explanation is more likely to be found in what we have good reason to regard as a peculiarity of Shakspere's chirography: the habit of making a final *e* (roman) which was identical in form with the "secretary" symbol for *es*.

II, iv, 128.—W is puzzled about the high imperious "thoughts" of love which can punish one who contemned love, and suggests that "thoughts" may be an error for "thonges." The general lover of Shakspere will be more puzzled to know how "thonges" can be "high imperious" and punish with bitter fasts. "Thonges" is, beyond doubt, one of the worst emendations ever suggested by a Shaksperian commentator.

II, iv, 164.—F erroneously reads "make" where "makes" is required. Here, too, W finds "compositor's grammar," but the scientific critic will find only an instance of an *es* symbol mistaken for roman *e*.

II, iv, 176-77.—W comments thus: "The extra-metrical 'Ay, and,' taken with the broken line 176, suggest a 'cut' and slight adaptation." "Ay, and" is not extra-metrical; "But she loves you?" is a normal short line, suggestive of nothing abnomal; and the line (177) is one of those Alexandrines which are to be found in most of Shakspere's plays.

II, iv. 188.—After this line F says *Exit* [*Valentine*], and W calls attention to it but he does not point out that this is not an "obvious" exit, that, as a matter of fact, from the the words "Will you make haste?" and Proteus's answer ("I will") we would expect Proteus (not Valentine) to depart.

II, iv, 189.—To W, Proteus's "I will" is again suggestive of a "cut"; but inasmuch as it is a direct, clean-cut, and unequivocal answer to Valentine's question, a "cut" is wholly improbable. Incidentally I may point out that there is not in existence a single Elizabethan dramatic manuscript which would afford the slightest basis for the notion that short lines indicate abridgement by an adapter.

II, iv, 194.—One of W's important props for his hypothsis of cutting and abridgement by a botcher is F's (alleged) rendering of II, iv, 194: "It is mine. or *Valentines* praise?" This imperfect verse has been variously emended, not satisfactorily. To W the line seems "hopeless." His comment on it (page 80) reads, "Most editors read 'Is it' for

'It is,' and bolder spirits like Theobald rewrite the line as 'Is it mine eye or Valentino's praise.' But the F period [after "minc"], 'It is' and the absolutely unmetrical character of the line as it stands render legitimate emendation impossible [!]. We are, therefore, forced to conclude that the text has been tampered with at this point, in order to shorten the soliloquy."

W's argument is rendered null and void for several reasons: (1) F has a comma, not a period, after the word "mine" (See Lee's facsimile, Halliwell's facsimile, Charlotte Porter and Helen Clarke's reprint, C. W. Nichols's edition of this play, p. 87, or W. J. Rolfe's edition, p. 149); (2) "Is it" for "It is" is a very likely misreading in "secretary" script (in which *s* and *t* are often indistinguishable). (See the present writer's *The Handwriting of the Renaissance,* pp. 73-74, or L. Kellner's *Restoring Shakespeare,* pp. 104 and 111. In the Folio text of *Hamlet,* I, iv, 1, we have "is it" for "it is," the same mistake as here); (3) the question mark at the end of the line furnishes some evidence that Proteus is thinking interrogatively; (4) the following line ("Her true perfection, or my false transgression?") parallels in construction the line we are considering; (5) all critics feel that the second foot is defective and needs emendation; (6) emendation of this foot is by no means hopeless; in fact, it is rather easy (or it should be so to a bibliographer), for one need only read "my eyne" for "mine" (an auditory error) to restore both sense and metre. "Valentino's" or "Valentinë's" for "Valentine's" is obvious. "Eyne," by the way, occurs several times in our poet's work, especially in his early plays. The lower case *o* in "or" should have told W that the word "mine" did not close the sentence.

That Shakspere could have intended us to read (or hear) "Valentinë's" *metri gratia,* is rendered probable by his reading "monëths" (or "monthë's") in this very play (in I, ii, 137 and in *3 Henry VI* (II, v, 38), "moonës" in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (II, i, 7), and "whalë's" in *Love's Labor's Lost* (V, ii, 332). Other Elizabethan poets did similar things on occasion; Shakspere only in his early plays.

II, iv, 197.—"She is fair; and so is Julia that I love." W finds the rhythm of this line "halting" and consequently "suspicious"—which is just downright nonsense. One need

only read "She's" for She is" and the iambic rhythm of the line is perfect.

II, iv, 207.—Proteus, having just met Silvia (for the first time) says, " 'Tis but her picture I have yet beheld." All commonsense editors and readers interpret the word "picture" here as meaning the lady's "outward show" (external beauty); but, says W, "this does not fit in with line 209, 'But when I look on her perfections' . . . It seems possible, therefore, that 'picture' here originally meant a portrait and that this speech, in the unabridged version, was spoken before Proteus had actually met Silvia." The fact that Silvia's picture is introduced into the play in a subsequent scene has no bearing on this passage. Inasmuch as "perfections" cannot be looked at with the physical eye, it is clear that Proteus speaks figuratively when he speaks of "looking on" (contemplating or coming under the influence of) her higher (mental and spiritual) qualities—such as Elizabethans associated with physical beauty.

II, v.—W finds this whole scene (between Launce and Speed) "so empty and formless that we can only assign it to the adapter. Having brought Proteus' two soliloquies [II, iv, 190-212 and II, vi, 1-43] together he was obliged to pen an interval scene of some kind." That the scene, the first meeting of two old friends in Milan who give each other information about their masters, is "formless" is only verbiage; the scene has a very definite structure: the greeting, the telling of the news, the merry jests (fitting the persons perfectly), and the departure to the ale-house. That an abridger would have done something so appropriate is nothing but wilful assumption. A knowledge of Shakspere's technique makes it clear that the scene is introduced between the two soliloquies to help give the impression of a lapse of time during which Proteus has fallen desperately in love with Silvia. In line 32 we are informed that the elopement is planned for "this night," but in II, iv, 177-81, Valentine has not fixed the day. From the intimacy between the Emperor-Duke and Proteus in III, i (note especially lines 6-7) it is clear that the latter has spent some time at the Milanese court.

II, vii, 67.—W so frequently wastes good space, ink, and labor to point out insignificant departures from F's punctuation that one wonders why he silently adopts F's bad "with all" instead of the generally received and sensible

"withal" ("I fear me, he will scarce be pleased withal"), *i.e.,* "therewith."

III, i, 1.—"Thurio's unnecessary entry and exit," says W, "are perhaps the result of an earlier portion of this scene having been 'cut.' " But it is at least as probable that Shakspere brought Thurio 'on' for the Duke's first two lines because he wanted Thurio to see that Proteus enjoyed the Duke's confidence. Otherwise Thurio might not have trusted Proteus to woo Silvia in his behalf. An abridger who thought it necessary to "cut" the scene would have eliminated Thurio altogether.

III, i, 187.—W thinks that a scene, probably concerning Julia and her arrival at the Host's inn, was lost after this line, otherwise he can't understand how during Valentine's soliloquy of eighteen lines (III, i, 170-87) so much could have happened (the issuing of the proclamation of banishment, Silvia's useless pleading with her father and her committal to prison). But such things are in perfect accord with Shakspere's known technique; besides, the events described Tubal-like by Proteus could actually have occurred within an hour or two. True, Valentine's soliloquy could not have taken an hour or two; but, then, some liberties must be allowed the dramatist, especially an Elizabethan dramatist in the early 'nineties. To suggest a lapse of time was one of the functions of the soliloquy.

III, i, 263.—When Launce, chorus-like, comments on his master and speaks of him as being more than "one knave," W thinks he is referring to the proverb "Two false knaves need no broker," and he implies that Launce is Proteus's "broker" (pander). But Launce is certainly nowhere shown us as a lewd "go-between." The meaning of the passage is perfectly clear: Proteus is a multiple knave: he is betraying Valentine, Silvia, Julia, and the Duke. Therefore, being more than one knave, he needs no broker—even by W's logic.

III, i, 271.—W rejects F's "Cate-log" for "catalogue" because he does not regard it as a quibble, even though he considers it a "Shakespearian spelling" which the compositor mistook for a joke. Then he goes on to say, "Author's spellings are always liable to crop up in comic speeches because the compositor then follows his copy more closely than usual"—an opinion in support of which not a particle of evidence can be adduced. On the contrary, the greater

likelihood is that the compositor regards comic stuff (into which metre does not enter) so lightly that in matters of orthography and punctuation he follows his own bent even more ruthlessly than in serious composition. It may be noted, by the way, that W says nothing about the hyphen in "Cate-log," though this may furnish a clew to the fact that the fortunate milkmaid's name is Kate, Shakspere's favorite name for a woman.

W instructs his readers that "'Catelog' was formerly a recognized spelling (v. N. E. R.)." A scientifically-minded and conscientious editor would, however, also have pointed out that the *N.E.D.* attributes that spelling only to the fifteenth century and cites only one example—from the year 1460. There is nothing to show, therefore, that in Shakspere's day (*circa* 1592) they were writing "cate-log."

As to the bald assertion that "Cate-log" is a Shaksperian spelling, be it noted that the word "Catalogue" (always spelled thus) occurs, according to Bartlett, in four of Shakspere's plays (*All's Well, Coriolanus, Macbeth,* and *Cymbeline*)—all printed, in all probability, from Shakspere's very manuscripts. Is it not time that the nonsense about "Shaksperian spellings" were given a decent burial?

III, i, 376.—This line, the last in the scene, is followed by *Exeunt* in F, an incorrect stage-direction, inasmuch as Speed unquestionably exits (*"he runs off,"* says W) after line 371. Such an error in stage-business, not noted by W, is important because it proves that the scene could not have been printed from players' parts. In a player's part the actor's "business" must be recorded correctly or not at all.

W, by the way, prints this line ("I'll after, to rejoice in the boy's correction" by itself, detached from the rest of Launce's speech, as if it were a line of verse, but there is nothing in F to justify this wholly inexcusable procedure.

III, ii, 3-5.—Finding in these lines unequivocal indications of the lapse of at least several days since Valentine's banishment, whereas lines 11-13 seem to imply that "at the utmost" only "an hour or two can have elapsed" since then, W attributes the discrepancy to "abridgement." W seems not to have heard of Shakspere's double-time technique; long- and short-time notes occur in all his plays, in accordance with the needs of the story. Furthermore, the Duke's question ("Is your countryman, According to our proclamation, gone?") may mean whether Valentine is not

in hiding somewhere, so as to be near Silvia. There is nothing in the words to imply that the proclamation was published only an hour or two ago.

III, ii, 46.—Because Proteus's consent seems to W to have been given "somewhat suddenly," he opines that "the Duke's argument was longer in the original." With a prepared villain like Proteus the Duke's argument was long enough; lines 39-41 were spoken by a hypocrite who was anxious to enter on the contemptible service suggested by the Duke. On the stage Proteus might pause to seem to deliberate after the Duke's speech before he says "You have prevail'd."

III, ii, 24-25.—"*Proteus.* I do, my lord.
Duke. And also, I think thou art not
ignorant" [etc.].

A "broken line [24], with extra-metrical 'and' in the following line, suggests adaptation." A short line, a direct answer to a preceding question, is never a suggestion of adaptation. The "And" of line 25 is not extra-metrical; all who are acquainted with Shakspere's metrics know that, like other poets of the period, *e.g.,* Jonson, he sometimes treated two vowels coming together (the *o* in "also" and the *"I"*) as if they were one. In *The Tempest,* for example, we have the line, "Against what should ensue. How came we *a*shore?" (For other examples see Abbott's *Grammar,* sec. 462). The theory of adaptation, therefore, does not apply.

III, ii, 91.—"Let us into the city presently," says Thurio. To W the rhythm of this line is "halting" and "suggests adaptation." But to an Elizabethan ear the rhythm of this line was perfect. Abbott, in his *Grammar* (sec. 457a), shows conclusively that Shakspere sometimes treated the prepositions "into" and "unto" as if the stress were on the second syllable. In *Henry V,* I, ii, 102, we have a perfect parallel to Thurio's line: "Look back into your mighty ancestors." And Juliet says, "How if, when I am laid into the tomb" [etc.]. Nothing in any of these verses justifies the notion of adaptation.

[*To be concluded*]

PROVERBS AND *SENTENTIAE* IN THE PLAYS OF SHAKSPERE

[*Concluded*]

By KATHERINE LEVER

THE fools do not generalize as much as one would expect, considering that most of them are not really fools but have a very keen insight into the workings of the human mind. Touchstone is an exception. He has all the cleverness necessary for him to be successful in his office as court jester. He especially delights in logical chains of reasoning based upon the hypotheses which he is pretending to prove, such as, "for the truest poetry is the more feigning, and lovers are given to poetry; and what they swear in poetry may be said, as lovers, they do feign."[37] Both in this scene with Audrey and Jacques and in those with Celia and Rosalind, he shows himself to be a master of the art of repartee.

The generalizations of the Fool in *King Lear* are unlike those of any other character because they are almost always sung rather than spoken. For instance,

> Fathers that wear rags
> Do make their children blind;
> But fathers that bear bags
> Shall see their children kind.
> Fortune, that arrant whore,
> Ne'er turns the key to th' poor.[38]

This example also illustrates the unpleasant, acrid quality of most of this Fool's generalizations. Many of his sayings are obviously plebeian and, for this reason, vulgar. He says in one place, "there's not a nose among twenty but can smell him that's stinking."[39] and in another, "he's mad that trusts in the tameness of a wolf, a horse's health, a boy's love, or a whore's oath."[40]

The heroines in comedies are even more prone to generalization than the heroes, because they are usually more in-

[37] *As You Like It,* III, iii, 19.
[38] *King Lear,* II, iv, 48.
[39] *Ibid., II,* iv, 71.
[40] *Ibid., III,* vi, 19.

telligent than the men. Imogen and Rosalind are much more clever than their lovers. Imogen is thoughtful—is, indeed, forced to think by the position in which she finds herself. Such statements as the following reveal a mind which can penetrate beneath external appearances. She says,

> To lapse in fullness
> Is sorer than to lie for need; and falsehood
> Is worse in kings than beggars.[41]

And again,

> Society is no comfort
> To one not sociable.[42]

Rosalind's remarks are of a lighter vein, mostly about love or men, and their main purpose is to tease Orlando. "Love is merely a madness,"[43] she says; and in another place, "Men are April when they woo, December when they wed. Maids are May when they are maids but the sky changes when they are wives."[44] Orlando is not even as good a match for her as Benedick is for Beatrice; he rather incites her to new and higher flights of fancy. He makes not one generalization in the whole play.

The hypothesis that the indulgence in generalizations is an indication of intelligence has been, I think, proved. The converse of this hypothesis is also true. Shakspere knew how amusing the misuse of proverbs could be; examples of such misuse are sprinkled through the plays, but there is one character who excels all others in his ability to mangle proverbs. Dogberry, who tries so very hard to be impressive and succeeds only in making a greater fool of himself with every sentence he utters, is unparalled in stupidity. Note, for example, his misquotation: "Comparisons are odorous."[45]

Laertes' advice to his sister has the same sententious tone which marks his father's advice to him; the two speeches coming in such close proximity have a very amusing effect. He is like his father in this scene and speaks like him; later in the play, when he is angry and impetuous, he wastes no words.

The comments of the chorus characters are quite often

---

[41] *Cymbeline,* III, vi, 12.
[42] *Ibid.,* IV, ii, 12.
[43] *As You Like It,* III, ii, 420.
[44] *Ibid.,* IV, i, 147.
[45] *Much Ado About Nothing,* III, v, 18.

expressed in the form of general statements.[46] Enobarbus, commenting on Antony, says:

> When valour preys on reason
> It eats the sword it fights with;[47]

in an aside earlier in the same scene he says,

> 'Tis better playing with a lion's whelp
> Than with an old one dying.[47a]

So many characters *do* use general remarks that it may be profitable to say something about those who do not. Proverbs and *sententiae* are not assigned indiscriminately to the characters having the longest parts and speaking the most generalizations. On the contrary, some characters (like Polonius) whose parts are not unusually long, speak twice as many as those with much longer parts.

Men of action seldom generalize. Of all the men portrayed by Shakspere, those with whom we most associate a love of action are Othello, Hotspur, and Coriolanus. It is interesting to note that Othello quotes only one proverb, and Hotspur and Coriolanus utter just one *sententia* apiece. In all three cases, the breaking of the rule is highly effective. Othello says,

> He that is robb'd, not wanting what is stol'n,
> Let him not know 't, and he's not robb'd at all,[48]

As Hotspur lies dying, his thoughts turn from the events which have filled his life to the significance of life in general.

> But thought's the slave of slife, and life time's fool,
> And time, that takes survey of all the world,
> Must have a stop. Oh, I could prophesy,
> But that the earthy and cold hand of death
> Lies on my tongue. No, Percy thou art dust
> And food for — (*Dies*)[48a]

The single *sententia* of Coriolanus is characteristic of his brusqueness:

> 'Tis fond to wail inevitable strokes,
> As 'tis to laugh at 'em.[49]

Falstaff speaks few generalizations, and he speaks these

---

[4]For a definition of the chorus character and a discussion of his function, see Arthur Colby Sprague, *Shakespeare and the Audience, A Study in the Technique of Exposition,* Cambridge, 1935, chapt. 7.

[48]*Othello,* III, iii, 342.

[48a]*I Henry IV,* V, iv, 81.

[49]*Coriolanus,* IV, i, 26.

with his tongue in his cheek. "The better part of valour is discretion"[50] is a familiar example. He has one speech in the tavern scene, when he is pretending to be Hal's father, that is universally recognized to be a parody of Euphuism. In it two proverbs from *Euphues* are quoted with mock seriousness. "For though the camomile, the more it is trodden on, the faster it grows, yet youth, the more it is wasted, the sooner it wears,"[51] and later, "This pitch, as ancient writers do report, doth defile."[52] He has too good a sense of humor to take either himself or his wise remarks seriously. I can almost hear him saying with great deliberation, as if he were making a profound statement, "and learning (is) a mere hoard of gold kept by a devil, till sack commences it and sets it in act and use,"[53] or "There's never none of these demure boys come to any proof."[54]

The three young women who are the heroines of the three greatest tragedies, Desdemona, Cordelia, and Ophelia, speak only one generalization apiece. Cordelia says,

> Time shall unfold what plighted cunning hides.
> Who cover faults, at last shame them derides.
> Well may you prosper!
> *France.* Come, my fair Cordelia,
> *Exeunt France and Cordelia.*[55]

This rhyme tag may be an actor's interpolation, but even if it is not, it is an old sentiment spoken with anger rather than with thought.

Desdemona, in her sweet, trustful way, is trying to understand what is troubling Othello. In the course of her attempted solution of the problem, she comforts herself with what appears to her to be an observed and proved law of psychology. Some business of the state, she thinks,

> Hath puddled his clear spirit; and in such cases
> Men's natures wrangle with inferior things,
> Though great ones are their object.[56]

Ophelia, too modest to tax Hamlet directly with his apparent change of heart, mentions it to him only once, and

---

[50] *I Henry IV,* V, iv, 20.
[51] *I Henry IV,* II, iv, 441. *Cf.* Tilley, *Elizabethan Proverb Lore,* p. 88.
[52] *Ibid., II,* iv, 441. *Cf.* Tilley, p. 248.
[53] *II Henry IV,* IV, iii, 123.
[54] *Ibid.,* IV, iii, 96.
[55] *King Lear,* I, i, 283.
[56] *Othello,* III, iv, 143.

then she takes refuge in the rewording of an old *sententia*. She says,

> for to the noble mind
> Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.[57]

It is not by accident that these young women generalize once with great dramatic effectiveness, and once only. They are by no means stupid, but our interest is centered on their emotions rather than their thoughts. They are creatures of feeling, whose emotions stir our hearts and whose sufferings arouse our pity.

Thus, generalizations are spoken most frequently by the more intellectual characters, are misused by the stupid ones trying to appear wise, rarely used by men of action and women of strong emotions, and laughed at by Falstaff. It may be objected that scholarship is in a deplorable state when it devotes so much time to demonstrating what any person with intelligence could have surmised. But is it not another feather in Shakspere's already well-feathered cap, if the results of a detailed investigation of his plays agree so well with an opinion formed from a knowledge of human beings and their ways? It is part of Shakspere's timelessness that he, living in an age which loved proverbs and *sententiae* for their own sake, refused for the most part to cater to this audience at the expense of realism. This is not always true, of course, but if we think that the number of generalizations is unusually large, we must remember that the men from whom Shakspere learned about human nature were Elizabethan men, and as such were more sententious (in the now obsolete sense of the word) than are men today.

IV. Sententiae and Situation

The tendency of certain characters to generalize is determined by their natures, but the number of generalizations and the form which they take are largely determined by the situations in the plays. Soliloquies, asides, rhyme tags, gaps in the action which must be filled somehow, death scenes, scenes of persuasion, consolation, and advice, and finally witty conversations, seem especially to incite the characters to exercise their faculty for generalization. In no one of these scenes is there any action except intellectual; they are

[57] *Hamlet*, III, i, 100.

all concerned with the expression of ideas or the interplay of minds.

How natural it is for the thoughts of a person to take a general form is well illustrated in the soliloquy of Brutus in the orchard.

> He would be crown'd.
> How that might change his nature, there's the question.
> It is the bright day that brings forth the adder,
> And that craves wary walking. Crown him—that!
> And then I grant we put a sting in him
> That at his will he may do danger with.
> Th' abuse of greatness is, when it disjoins
> Remorse from power.[58]

This soliloquy is one of actual thinking[59] and as such reveals clearly how the mind of an intelligent person deals with concepts rather than with particulars. Generalizations are also common in soliloquies in which the person is conceived as speaking aloud.[60]

Many soliloquies are devoted to the justification of past actions or to the attempt to decide about future ones. Why are proverbs quoted in these soliloquies? The answer to this question involves the understanding of one of the most important characteristics of proverbs—and one which, I fear, I should have emphasized long ago. A proverb used as an argument is an appeal to authority, the authority of the slowly accumulated wisdom of the race. In the case of the proverb, this authority is authentic, because the very existence of the proverb depends upon its having been judged as true by countless numbers of people.

In the case of the *sententia,* the authority is not authentic but is assumed to be. *Sententiae* are often introduced by the phrase," They say," which indicates that the speaker is trying to find support in a current popular opinion. Even those which are not introduced in this way, because of the general form in which they are cast, tend to give the impression that the statement has more authority behind it than just merely of the person speaking. In many other places, the authority appealed to is not the experience of the race but the experience of the individual. He has, perhaps,

---

[58] *Julius Caesar,* II, 1, 12.
[59] Sprague, *Shakespeare and the Audience,* p. 64.
[60] *Richard II,* V, v, 1-66.

observed the actions of other men in similar situations, and he feels competent to perceive in these actions a rule which is universally valid.

This is the explanation for the rationalizing found in the following soliloquies. When Proteus is trying to convince himself that he is not doing wrong in deserting Julia for Sylvia, he says,

> Unheedful vows may heedfully be broken,
> And he wants wit that wants resolvëd will
> To learn his wit t' exchange the bad for better.[61]

Enobarbus, in an aside, which is really a soliloquy, is debating with himself whether or not he should leave Antony. He says,

> Mine honesty and I begin to square.
> The loyalty well held to fools does make
> Our faith mere folly. Yet he that can endure
> To follow with allegiance a fall'n lord
> Does conquer him that did his master conquer
> And earns a place i' th' story.[62]

This appeal to authority also explains the frequency with which proverbs and *sententiae* are employed in scenes of persuasion. Ulysses arguing with Achilles,[63] Isabella with Angelo,[64] Cassandra and Andromache with Hector, all indulge in generalizations freely.

> *Andromache.* O, be persudaded! Do not count it holy
> To hurt by being just. It is as lawful,
> For we would give much, to use violent thefts,
> And rob in the behalf of charity.
> *Cassandra.* It is the purpose that makes strong the vow;
> But vows to every purpose must not hold.
> Unarm, sweet Hector.
> *Hector.* Hold you still, I say.
> Mine honour keeps the weather of my fate.
> Life every man holds dear, but the dear man
> Holds honour far more precious-dear than life.[65]

Hector's words illustrate another reason why generalizations are so often used as arguments. No matter what position one takes, it is always possible to find a proverb or *sententia* to support it. In this fact lies the source both of their popularity and weakness. The quotation of a proverb

---

[61] *Two Gentlemen of Verona,* II, vi, 11.
[62] *Antony and Cleopatra,* III, xiii, 41.
[63] *Troilus and Cressida,* III, iii.
[64] *Measure for Measure,* II, ii.
[65] *Troilus and Cressida,* V, iii, 19.

also involves a shift in the ground of the argument, which it is difficult to combat.

A very interesting scene in which proverbs are used as arguments is the following between Queen Elizabeth and Richard the Third.

Richard. Be eloquent in my behalf to her.
Queen. An honest tale speeds best being plainly told.
Richard. Then plainly to her tell my loving tale.
Queen. Plain and not honest is too harsh a style.
Richard. Your reasons are too shallow and too quick.[66]

The Elizabethan audience undoubtedly relished the nimbleness with which the Queen matched her wits against those of Richard.

Some asides, such as that of Enobarbus quoted above, follow the same rules as the soliloquies. Others are reminiscent of the moustache-stroking villain of Victorian melodrama. Richard the Third's dissembling with the young prince is characteristically hypocritical and cruel.

Richard. (*Aside*) So wise, so young, they say, do never live long.
Prince. What say you, uncle?
Richard. I say, without characters fame lives long.
(*Aside*) Thus, like the formal vice, Iniquity,
I moralize two meanings in one word. . . .
Prince. And if I live until I be a man,
I'll win our ancient right in France again,
Or die a soldier as I liv'd a king.
Richard. (*Aside*) Short summers lightly have a forward spring.[67]

Sententiae, characterized by brevity and concentration of meaning, make fine asides and are often used in this way.

Rhyme tags, which close scenes and cover the exits of the actors, frequently took a general form and served thus the further purpose of summing up the preceding scene or anticipating the future. Two examples of this use will suffice. Both are spoken by King Claudius at the end of a scene. In the first, he focuses the attention of the audience on the future; in the second, he gives the moral of the scene just past.

It shall be so.
Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go.[68]
My words fly up, my thoughts remain below.
Words without thoughts never to heaven go.[69]

---

[66] *Richard III,* IV, iv, 357.
[67] *Ibid.,* III, i. 79.
[68] *Hamlet,* III, i, 195.
[69] *Ibid.,* III, iii, 97.

Because these tags were so useful in providing the actors with an effective exit and because some of them are not very good, it has been suggested that some are interpolations by the actors. I believe, however, that most of them were original with Shakspere. If actors did add lines, they would be likely to quote some old saying which they had heard rather than express a new opinion. Despite the proverbial sound of these tags, very few are real proverbs.

Occasionally Shakspere found himself in a very difficult position. The exigencies of the plot demanded a short lapse of time. He had no curtain to lower; and it would have distracted attention to introduce new characters or to interpose another scene. Let us turn to such a situation and see what Shakspere did. In the first scene of the fourth act of *Measure for Measure,* the Duke says to Mariana,

> Take, then, this your companion by the hand,
> Who hath a story ready for your ear,
> I shall attend your leisure; but make haste;
> The vaporous night approaches.[70]

Mariana and Isabella then go out together and the Duke is left alone. Shakspere has given the audience an excuse for the short absence of the two women, but there must necessarily be a pause in the action. This interval is filled by the following words of the Duke:

> O place and greatness! Millions of false eyes
> Are stuck upon thee; volumes of report
> Run with these false and most contrarious quests
> Upon thy doings; thousand escapes of wit
> Make thee the father of their idle dreams,
> And rack thee in their fancies.[71]

Mariana and Isabella enter immediately afterwards. The time has obviously been foreshortened, but this was permitted by the theatrical convention that time could be presumed to elapse during a soliloquy in the same way in which it was passed in the Greek theatre during a lyric of the chorus.

The necessity of diverting the attention of the audience was an incentive for Shakspere to write his best in these situations. Some of his finest passages would have been lost to us if he had filled the gaps in other ways. A case in

[70]Line 55.
[71]Line 60.

point is Jacques' speech, "All the world's a stage," which is assumed to cover the time required by Orlando to go and bring back Adam.[72]

Gaunt's words, spoken just before his death, indicate the contemporary Elizabethan belief concerning the words of the dying.

> O, but they say the tongues of dying men
> Enforce attention like deep harmony.
> Where words are scarce they're seldom spent in vain,
> For they breathe truth that breathe their words in pain.
> He that no more must say is listen'd more
> Than they whom youth and ease have taught to glose;
> More are men's ends mark'd than their lives before;
> The setting sun, and music at the close,
> As the last taste of sweets, is sweetest last,
> Writ in remembrance more than things long past.[73]

It was also a common belief that a person at the point of death had an insight into the meaning of life denied to others. Hotspur's desire to prophesy when he is dying may be due to this belief.

The fear of death and the attempts of friends to reconcile the dying person to his fate are also reasons for the abundance of generalizations in death scenes. Death was a fascinating subject for reflection to the Elizabethan[24] and he needed only a slight provocation to express his opinion on the subject.

It is natural, therefore, for Claudio, who has just been sentenced to die, to say,

> The weariest and most loathëd wordly life
> That age, ache, penury, and imprisonment
> Can lay on nature is a paradise
> To what we fear of death,[75]

and that the Duke and Isabella should try to combat this fear with such arguments as,

> Thy best of rest is sleep,
> And that thou oft provk'st; yet grossly fear'st
> Thy death, which is no more.[76]
>
> The sense of death is most in apprehension.[77]

---

[72]*As You Like It,* II, vii, 139.
[73]*Richard II,* II, i, 5.
[74]Theodore Spencer, *Death and Elizabethan Tragedy,* Cambridge, 1936, chap. 4.
[75]*Measure for Measure,* III, i, 129.
[76]*Ibid.,* III, i, 17.
[77]*Ibid.,* III, i, 78.

This scene illustrates one of the most common sources of *sententiae*.

It is so nearly a platitude to say that mere words can not alleviate sorrow that it is somewhat disconcerting to find so many of Shakspere's characters indulging in this futile behaviour. Shakspere knew how foolish it is to try to "patch grief with proverbs,"[78] but he also knew that human beings always do try to console one another in trouble and that they usualy resort to proverbs and sententious remarks. The following conversation is the model for such scenes of consolation and demonstrates clearly the tendency of the consoler to employ generalizations and of the consoled to rebel against them.

Duke. Let me speak like yourself and lay a sentence
Which, as a grise, or step, may help these lovers
Into your favour.
When remedies are past, the griefs are ended
By seeing the worst, which late on hopes depended.
To mourn a mischief that is past and gone
Is the next way to draw new mischief on.
What cannot be preserv'd when fortune takes,
Patience her injury a mock'ry makes.
The robb'd that smiles steals something from the thief;
He robs himself that spends a bootless grief.

Brabantio. So let the Turk of Cyprus us beguile;
We lose it not, so long as we can smile.
He bears the sentence well that nothing bears
But the free confort which from thence he hears;
But he bears the sentence and the sorrow
That to pay grief must of poor patience borrow.
These sentences, to sugar, or to gall,
Being strong on both sides, are equivocal.
But words are words. I never yet did hear
That the bruis'd heart was piercëd through the ear.
Beseech you, now to the affairs of state.[79]

Elizabethans delighted in word-play of all kinds and enjoyed particularly sparring with proverbs. In *Henry V*, when the French soldiers are talking before the battle, there are two jests based upon proverbs. The Dauphin says, "Le chien est retourné à son propre vomissement, et la truie lavée au baurbier. Thou mak'st use of anything;" to which the Constable sarcastically replies, "Yet do I not use

[78] *Much Ado About Nothing*, V, i, 17.
[79] *Othello*, I, iii, 199. *Cf. Much Ado*, V, i.

my horse for my mistress, or any such proverb so little kin to the purpose."[80]

A stichomythy of proverbs was very popular and had all the weight of Anglo-Saxon tradition behind it. Note the ease with which the two young wits thrust and parry.

Constable. By my faith, sir, but it is! Never anybody saw it but his lackey. 'Tis a hooded valour; and when it appears, it will bate.
Orleans. Ill will never said well.
Constable. I will cap that proverb with 'There is flattery in friendship.'
Orl. And I will take up that with 'Give the devil his due.'
Const. Well plac'd! There stands your friend for the devil. Have at the very eye of that proverb with 'A pox for the devil.'
Orl. You are the better at proverbs, by how much 'a fool's bolt is soon shot.'[81]

Another example of the way in which a clever person may turn a proverb to good advantage occurs in *Henry IV,* Part II. The Justice says to Falstaff, "Wake not a sleeping wolf," to which Falstaff flippantly replies, "'To wake a wolf is as bad as smell a fox."[82] The boy in *Henry V* says, "For Nym, he hath heard that men of few words are the best men, and therefore he scorns to say his prayers."[83]

V. Shakspere as Croesus*

It is a dangerous occupation to pluck generalizations from their context as one would pick blackberries from bushes, even though they make a delicious sauce with which to cover up a rather tasteless cake. But I hope I have sufficiently demonstrated the contextual integrity of the generalizations, so that no harm will result from studying the form and content of the generalizations without reference to the speaker or situation.

Shakspere was not content to use *sententiae* without alter-

[80]III, vii, 68.
[81]*Ibid.,* 121.
[82]I, ii, 173.
[83]III, ii, 38.
*Constant and penetrating observation had made him a Croesus in 'maxims and reflections', and he never tires of giving some witty point to his wisdom and knowledge of life." Levin L. Schücking, *The Meaning of Hamlet,* London, 1937, p. 68.
[84]*Hamlet,* III, i, 100.

ation. Sometimes he did, of course, have the characters repeat old ideas in their old form for the sake of realism. Often, however, he took the old ideas and reworded, or elaborated, upon them. An example of the first is Ophelia's *sententia,*

> for to the noble mind
> Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.[84]

How much finer this is than the prosaic sentiment found in *Euphues* and in the *Pandosto* of Greene, "A gift is valued by the mind of the giver."[85]

The old proverb, "The blunt whetstone makes a sharp edge,"[86] is twisted cleverly by Shakspere into "For always the dullness of the fool is the whetstone of the wits."[87] The idea that we lessen our woes by telling them is ancient. It occurs in *Petite Palace,* for instance, in the form, "it somewhat easeth the afflicted to utter their annoy,[88] but Malcom —and notice that he is only a minor character—says,

> The grief that does not speak
> Whispers the o'erfraught heart and bids it break.[89]

It has been thought, in the past that a moral system of ethics could be constructed from the wise sayings of Shakspere. This, however, would be possible only if example were joined to precept or if only those statements were selected which were spoken by the virtuous characters. When the generalizations are completely isolated and classified by content, it becomes apparent at once that many different and mutually exclusive opinions are held about the same subject.

About death, for instance, Cæsar says,

> Cowards die many times before their deaths;
> The valiant never taste of death but once.
> Of all the wonders that I yet have heard,
> It seems to me most strange that men should fear,
> Seeing that death, a necessary end,
> Will come when it will come,[90]

but Claudio said that the worst life was preferable to death,[91] and Catesby says, " 'Tis a vile thing to die."[92]

---

[85]Tilley, p. 346.
[86]*Ibid.,* p. 325.
[87]*As You Like It,* I, ii, 58.
[88]Tilley, p. 302.
[89]*Macbeth,* IV, iii, 209.
[90]*Julius Caesar,* II, ii, 32. *Cf. II Henry IV,* III, ii, 250, and *King Lear,* V, ii, 9.
[91]*Measure for Measure,* III, i, 129.
[92]*Richard III,* III, ii, 62.
[93]*Julius Caesar,* III, i, 101. *Cf. Othello,* I, iii, 309, and *Timno,* V, i, 225.

Diametrically opposed to this is the frequently expressed opinion that death is a boon because it ends mortals' woes. Cassius says,

> Why, he that cuts off twenty years of life,
> Cuts off so many years of fearing death.[93]

There is no greater unanimity about the more abstract subject, authority. Within the single play, *Measure for Measure,* the statements about authority do agree, but only because they are all spoken either by Claudio or Isabella. On the other hand, Parolles says, "There is no fettering of authority,"[94] and the Clown in *The Winter's Tale,* "and though Authority be a stubborn bear, yet he is oft led by the nose with gold."[95]

It is almost impossible to group the different conceptions of fortune and the gods, since there are almost as many beliefs as there are characters who mention them. Four general types, however, may be distinguished. First of all, there is the belief that,

> The gods are just and of our pleasant vices
> Make instruments to scourge us,[96]

which is the anthesis of Gloucester's remark earlier in the same play,

> As flies to wanton boys are we to th' gods,
> They kill us for their sport.[97]

It is frequently denied that fortune controls the affairs of men,[98] and even more frequently it is asserted that at some point in a man's life he is the master of his fate for the rest of it.[99] Finally, there is the completely fatalistic point of view illustrated by Richard III. He says,

> All unavoided is the doom of destiny.[100]

"Virtue is bold, and goodness never fearful,"[101] says one character, and he is seconded by another who calls virtue beauty.[102] But there are also many pessimistic remarks about the ease with which virtue may be contaminated,[103]

---

[94]*All's Well that Ends Well,* II, iii, 251.
[95]IV, iv, 832.
[96]*King Lear,* V, iii, 170. *Cf. Richard II,* III, ii, 61, and *Antony,* II, i, 5.
[97]*Ibid.,* IV, i, 36.
[98]*Ibid.,* I, ii, 127. *Cf. Julius Caesar,* I, ii, 140, and *All's Well,* I, i, 231.
[99]*Julius Caesar,* I, ii, 139, IV, iii, 218.
[100]*Richard III,* IV, iv, 218.
[101]*Measure for Measure,* III, i, 215.
[102]*Twelfth Night,* III, iv, 399. *Cf. Hamlet,* I, v, 53.

and occasionally virtue is scorned as the refuge of the cowardly."[103]

The suggestion may be made that if particular generalizations do not yield us any positive information, perhaps, there is a general trend of interests which is significant. I have classified Shakspere's generalizations rather loosely according to content and found the following: Love leads the list as the most popular subject, but outstrips by only a narrow margin fortune and the gods, sin, virtue, wisdom, sorrow, consolation, and wit. Other popular subjects are life and death, majesty, man, woman, time, words, youth, the fitness of means to ends, and like producing like. The significance of this list lies in the fact that the number of generalizations about a subject is almost exactly proportionate to the universal appeal which the subject has. Moreover, as we proceed down the list, and the universality of themes decreases, this decrease is balanced by the increasing fascination of the themes for the Elizabethan mind. Thus love, which admittedly is the most interesting subject to the average man, heads the list, whereas majesty and the fitness of means to ends, which concern us less today than they did the Elizabethans, are near the end of the list.

Dr. Morris LeRoy Arnold has discovered a trend in the treatment of certain subjects, which might have autobiographical significance. He says,

> Thus the moralizing swings a full circle, beginning with the conventionally sympathetic attitude toward the unhappiness of monarchs, but soon abandoning these long and ornamental speeches for sententious and epigrammatic truisms on love and ethics, these in turn giving way to more intimate and intellectual philosophizings on human conduct, and these supplanted by the bitterly misanthropic broodings.[105]

But naturally it is the scenes within a play and the mood of the play as a whole which influence most the subjects discussed. Thus, judging from the number of generalizations on the subject, sorrow would seem to be the dominating theme in *Richard II* and important in *Macbeth* and other tragedies; wit and wisdom in *Love's Labor's Lost,* (wisdom also in *Hamlet* and *As You Like It*), love most of all in

[103]*Julius Caesar,* I, ii, 315, *Macbeth,* IV, iii, 19, *Romeo and Juliet,* II, iii, 17.
[104]*Richard III,* V, iii, 310.
[105]*The Soliloquies of Shakespeare, A Study in Technic,* New York, 1911, p. 153.

Romeo and Juliet, but also emphasized in *Midsummer Night's Dream, As You Like It,* and *All's Well that Ends Well;* fortune in *Antony and Cleopatra* and *King Lear;* sin in *Troilus and Cressida;* authority in *Measure for Measure,* and so forth.

Shakspere's restraint kept him free from censure when the proverb began to lose its popularity, but the delight of the nineteenth century in *sententiae* has injured the true appreciation of Shakspere more than it has helped. Many fine passages have become hackneyed by continual repetition, and others have lost their true meaning by being wrenched from their context. Nevertheless, the *sententiae* have withstood well the "whips and scorns of time," both because of the beauty of the expression and the depth of understanding revealed. What were to other writers merely literary embellishments or flights of fancy became by the force of Shakspere's genius vital truths. The words do not issue forth from the mouths of the characters; they are the thoughts of human beings, living, thinking men and women.[106]

Bryn Mawr College
Bryn Mawr, Pa.

[106]For a discussion of collections of proverbs, bibliographical material, and parallels for Shaksperian proverbs, see Richard Jente, "The Proverbs of Shakespeare with Early and Contemporary Parallels," *Washington University Studies, Humanistic Series,* vol. XIII, no. 2, pp. 391-444. The articles by M. C. Wahl, "Das parömiologischeSprachgut bei Shakespeare," *Jahrbuch der deutschen Shakespeare-Gesellschaft,* vol. XXII, pp. 45-130, vol. XXIII, pp. 21-08, study the proverbs from still another viewpoint.

WHO IS *SILVIA?* — AND OTHER PROBLEMS IN THE GREENE-SHAKSPERE RELATIONSHIP

By THOMAS H. MCNEAL

A *MOTIF* of considerable complexity appearing in many of the works of Robert Greene is that in which a lady, adorned by nature with much beauty and many virtues, receives a host of suitors, usually men of rank from foreign parts. Thus may the scheme be expressed in its simplest form. The notion more often than not, however, is expanded into a richer pattern by the addition of certain other suitable and companionable possibilities; the suitors, one after another, make speeches to her, expressing their worth and their hopes of obtaining her hand; or she may have a kind father, who allows her to choose, for love, a husband from among them. The choice is often made difficult, in that the lady must decide between a man of rank and a man of lower social order; between a rich fool and a poor wise man; between a handsome but wicked cad and a none too good-looking but virtuous hero.

The device is a pretty one. A beautiful lady confronted with the choice of a suitor is the very essence of the love tale. Furthermore, it has conflict and drama in it; for inevitably one or more of the suitors must be disappointed and may do something about the matter. Greene has played many variations upon the theme. It is clearly evident in at least six of his works: *Mamilla* (Part I, 1580, and Part II, 1583), *The Anatomie of Loves Flatteries* (1583), *Penelopes Web* (1587), *Euphues His Censure to Philatus* (1587), *Orlando Furioso* (1588?), and *A Groatsworth of Wit* (1592).[1] Thus it may be said to cover the whole period of Greene's writing career, appearing in his first and last works.

The Anatomie of Loves Flatteries and *Orlando Furioso* show the *motif* in its fullest development. In these two pieces the fanciful situation becomes the backbone of the plot. The lady's guardian allows the gentlemen—one is of

[1]Dates come from J. C. Jordan's *Robert Greene,* Columbia University Press, N. Y., 1915.

lower rank but of greater virtue than the rest—to make proposal speeches; each tells his worth as a prospective husband; the lady is given free choice in the matter. This last phase of a "lady's choice" likewise appears in *Mamillia* and in *Euphues His Censure* (Second Tale). In the *Loves Flatteries* occurs another and even more interesting development in the *motif:* there Sylvia, the herorine, after the suitors have made their proposal speeches, presents them with her own pointed and witty evaluation of them.

Thus has this device of a convocation of suitors come down to us through Greene. The purpose of its present investigation is to answer a question that by now should have grown nearly inevitable: Did Shakspere borrow the device—along with certain other matters—from Greene, for use in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and *The Merchant of Venice?*

Of Greene's six pieces containing a convocation of suitors, two, it seems to me, bear directly upon these plays of Shakspere. They are *Mamillia,* Parts I and II, and *The Anatomie of Loves Flatteries,* a sort of sequel tacked on to the *Mamillia,* but bearing little relation to it save in its many times reiterated theme—that woman should wed not for money but for love alone. Since these love-pamphlets must be held clearly in mind if the discussion that follows is to be understood, it is well to present full summaries of them:

Mamillia (Part I).

> Mamillia, daughter of Signor Gonzaga of Padua, serves a Duchess in the court at Venice. There she meets Florian, who so frightens her with his ardent wooing that she returns home to her father's house in Padua. There she is set upon by other young men; and by one in particular, Pharicles, a wealthy courtier. The lady is at last deceived by his seeming sincerity, and Gonzaga, seeing his daughter twenty and marriageable, decides to sanction the young man's suit. He counsels Mamillia's nurse, Castillia, to ascertain whether the choice would please her. Castillia finds Mamillia reading a letter from Florian, and seizes this opportunity to discourse on the blisses of married life, suggesting that Pharicles would make a fine husband. Driven on in this fashion, Mamillia allows herself to fall deeply in love with the man.
>
> But on the very day when she promises him her hand, he meets Publia, her cousin, and they fall in love. The false Pharicles de-

cides now to wed Mamillia for her money, and yet to enjoy Publia. Gonzaga, possibly suspicious, declares to Pharicles that he wishes Mamillia wed for love, not for her wealth. The villain-hero replies he loves the girl devotedly, and the pair are then formally betrothed.

He has entangled himself too deeply with Publia, however, and when he begins to suspect that Mamillia has learned of his villainy, he goes into exile—into the land of Sicillia—disguised as a pilgrim.

Mamillia (Part II).

Mamillia, at home, suffers much over the falsehood of Pharicles. A secret friends tells her and Gonzaga that her lover is either betrothed or married to Publia. Gonzaga at last takes her to Publia who explains the matter as it is—even showing letters from Pharicles. Mamillia, though sad at the discovery of Pharicles' perfidy, is nevertheless relieved that he is neither betrothed nor wed to her cousin, and hopes that he may still be won back.

In Sicillia, still dissembling, yet nevertheless torn between his two loves, Pharicles settles in Saragossa, the chief city of that land. He soon discards his disguise, and makes friends with the people, particularly with a young nobleman, Ferragas, the son of the Governor, Signor Fernese.

Soon he is seen by Clarynda, a professed courtesan, beautiful, rich, and of a fine old family. She writes him a letter, confessing a passion for him,—even promising that she will quit her evil ways if he will only love her. Pharicles debates whether he had not better take her, with all her wealth; but Farragus advises him to abandon such a notorious harlot. In the meantime he meets the virtuous and beautiful lady, Modesta, and is so struck by her charms that the thought of Clarynda becomes disgusting, and he writes the courtesan a letter, in which he says that he cannot plight troth with a dishonest strumpet. Clarynda is so enraged when she receives he missive that she goes before the city fathers and accusses Pharicles of being a spy. These wise men comdenm him to death; and because there is a law forbidding spies and foreigners to defend themselves, Pharicles is not allowed to submit evidence that would clear him of the crime. The Governor reprieves him and extends his life for forty days. There is a merchant of Padua, Rhomberto by name, in Saragossa at this time, and he hears of the plight of the unfortunate Pharicles. This man returns in haste to Padua, to relate to Gonzaga the distressing story of the young man.

But in Padua Gonzaga lies dying. He tells Mamillia that he has left her the only heir and sole executor of his lands, with this proviso,—that if she marry the faithless Pharicles, she shall be disinherited, and all the estate go to Padua. Thus when Rhomberto arrives, Gonzaga is dead. He is forced to tell Mamillia the sad story. The lady is still constant to her betrothal vow, and declares that she will obey her father only so far as nature allows. She then furnishes a ship, and in disguised apparel, sails for Sicillia, whither she arrives on the day before the execution is to take place.

In haste she gets a copy of the letters that have passed between Pharicles and Clarynda, and on the fatal day arrives at the place of doom ahead of the magistrates. When they at last arrive, a dramatic scene takes place: "Signor Fernese standing up to pronounce the fatall sentence, was interrupted by Mamillia, who was coming in richly attired and strangely disguised, kneeling on her knees, craved leave to speak." At the presentation of the evidence, Clarynda confesses and receives the punishment due such an offence. Mamillia and Pharicles return happily to Padua, where they are married. The senators of the city, after hearing their story, allow them to keep Mamillia's lands.

The Anatomie of Loves Flatteries.

Mamillia writes to her friend, the Lady Modesta, whom she met in Saragossa, a letter of warning to women on their trials in love. Modesta replies that the advice comes too late, for she is already in love. Her friend wants her to marry for wealth, while she desires a husband of wisdom and beauty, one whom she can respect. She asks Mamillia for counsel. Mamillia advises her to follow the dictates of her fancy. Then she tells a tale to prove her point:

There dwelt in Toledo a certain Castilian named Valasco, a gentleman and a merchant of great wealth. In his youth he was wed to a kinswoman, Sylandra, without wit or beauty. When he grew older, he detested her, and she became the only woman his crazy stomach could not digest.

They had only one daughter, Sylvia; and Valasco was determined to marry this child to love, and love alone. Sylandra died when the girl was sixteen, thus leaving the marriage arrangements in her father's hands.

Many suitors she had, but on Valasco's advice that she marry only for love, she refused them all; until one day there appeared three "Gentlemen of Sundry nations and divers dispositions, the first an Italian called S. Gradasso, the second a Frenchman named Monsieur de Vaste, the third an Englishman called Master Petronius of great wit but very small wealth.

These three were first interviewed by Sylvia's father. Signor Gradasso, the aged, offered wealth. Monsieur de Vaste, not being the wisest man in the world, let a man of his called Jaques be his interpreter, "faining that he was utterly ignorant of the Spanish tongue." Poor Petronius offered his suit sadly, since he had nothing but himself to give to Valasco's beautiful daughter. The father, after his custom, took the suitors to Sylvia's chamber and told his child to choose one or dismiss all.

Sylvia related to the suitors a dream that she had had. She saw Venus in a garden, where there were three trees: an old and withered oak, but full of acorns; a beautiful cedar, but rotted at the root; and a green bay tree, fine, but without berries. Venus then changed the girl into a dove and bade her build a nest in one of the trees. But before she could choose she awoke. Now,

she asked the suitors, what was the meaning of the dream? They argued the trees and themselves, and in a sprightly fashion Sylvia made comments upon their statements. In the end she chose Petronius for her husband.

The Two Gentlemen of Verona relates itself at its beginning to the evaluation of suitors and the problems of the lady's choice, as it is expressed in *The Anatomie of Loves Flatteries.*[2] Act I, Scene ii, opens:

Julia. But say, Lucetta, now we are alone,
Wouldst thou, then, counsel me to fall in love?
Lucetta. Ay, Madam, so you stumble not unheedfully.
Julia. Of all the fair resort of gentlemen
That every day with parle encounter me,
In thy opinion which is worthiest love?
Lucetta. Please you repeat their names, I'll show my mind
According to my shallow simple skill.
Julia. What think'st thou of the fair Sir Eglamour?
Lucetta. As of a knight well-spoken, neat, and fine;
But, were I you, he never should be mine.
Julia. What think'st thou of the gentle Proteus?
Lucetta. Lord, Lord! to see what folly reigns in us!
Julia. How now, what means this passion at his name?
Lucetta. Pardon, dear madam; 'tis a passing shame
That I, unworthy body as I am,
Should censure thus on lovely gentlemen.
Julia. Why not on Proteus, as of all the rest?
Lucetta. Then, thus,— of many good I think him best.
Julia. Your reason?
Lucetta. I have no other but a woman's reason;
I think him so because I think him so.
Julia. And wouldst thou have me cast my love on him?
Lucetta. Ay, if you thought your love not cast away.
Julia. Why, he, of all the rest, hath never mov'd me.
Lucetta. Yet he, of all the rest, I think, best loves ye.[3]

But, save for the fact that the *motifs* are the same, there is little reason for accusing Shakspere of borrowing this passage from Greene. The men under discussion are so slightly individualized that there is no chance of comparing them with the suitors of *Loves Flatteries.* In addition, the spirit of raillery present in Greene's episode is almost wholly absent in Shakspere's.

That the scene was developed out of the *motif* as pre-

[3]*Two Gentlemen or Verona,* The Arden Shakespeare, D. C. Heath and Co., 1931.

sented by Greene, however, finds considerable confirmation in other directions: the novel and the play are similar in a number of devices and plot situations that are not necessarily connected with the evaluation of suitors; and the *Two Gentlemen* is related at certain points to *Mamillia,* as well.

But in order to understand what these similarities are, it is important to recall the story of "The Shepherdess Felismena," from the *Diana Enamorada* by Montemayor, which is the source already assigned to the *Two Gentlemen:*[4]

> Felix woos a fair shepherdess, Felismena, who though in love with him, affectedly refuses to read the letter that he writes her. However, she at last admits her love, and all goes well until the father of Felix, feeling that the boy is wasting his time at home, sends him away to court. There he falls in love with the lady Celia. The faithful Felismena, longing for her departed lover, disguises herself as a boy and goes in search of him. Putting up at an inn in the city where the faithless Felix now resides, she goes with her host to see the lover serenade his new mistress, who spurns him. After this incident, Felismena becomes Felix's page, and is sent by him to plead his cause to Celia. That lady, however, bewails the fate of the deserted Felismena, of whom she has heard, and falls in love with the page. The story from then on goes quickly into tragedy: Celia dies for love of the page; Felix, full of grief, disappears; the fair shepherdess goes on a long two-years' search for him.

Straightway it will be seen that the "Fair Shepherdess" has much in common with *Mamillia,* as well as with the *Two Gentlemen:* (1) A letter plays a part in the plot. (2) There is a villain-hero. (3) A second lady is wooed by the hero, but she is aware of his faithlessness and refuses his suit. (4) The forsaken heroine goes disguised in search of her lover.

From such an analysis, it might appear that Shakspere and Greene are merely using the same source; and such a conclusion is probably correct, up to a certain point. But it does not take into consideration the likenesses between *Mamillia* and the *Two Gentlemen* that are not present in the "Fair Shepherdess"; and it does not account for the similarities that exist between *The Anatomie of Loves Flatteries*—which bears no relation at all to Montemayer—and Shakspere's comedy.

---

[4]Shakspere's employment of this work has been thoroughly analyzed in Miss Rachelle Lee Allen's *Shakespeare's Use of His Sources in "The Two Gentlemen of Verona,"* M. A. Thesis, University of Texas, 1935.

The problem is made fairly clear by a list of those similarities that are analogous to the play and Greene's novels alone:

Mamillia and the *Two Gentlemen*—

(1) The heroine is advised by her woman companion to marry a faithless lover.
(2) The villain-hero marries the long-suffering heroine in the end.

Loves Flatteries and the *Two Gentlemen*—

(1) The heroine is named Sylvia.
(2) The lady asks counsel as to whom she had best wed.
(3) The motif of a convocation of suitors appears.

My conclusion is that Shakspere—possibly because of the likeness that exists between *Mamillia* and the "Fair Shepherdess"—has combined with the Montemayor source certain elements found in Greene's first novel; furthermore, that he was led naturally into using features of *The Anatomie of Loves Flatteries* because this novel is a sequel to *Mamillia.* That he did have his eye on the *Loves Flatteries* is evidenced particularly in his employment of two devices absent in the "Fair Shepherdss"; the name *Sylvia* (*Silvia* in the *Two Gentlemen*); and the *motif* of a convocation of suitors.

Storojenko has already pointed out one point of similarity between *The Merchant of Venice* to the novel *Mamillia.* In commenting upon the heroine's rescue of her lover, he suggests that "Mamillia disguises herself, like Portia in the *Merchant of Venice,* as a man."[5] This is exaggeration, pure and simple, since the story states merely that the lady *disguised* herself, leaving the rest to the reader's imagination. Storojenko's slip, however, was natural enough, and shows the power of suggestion; for Mamillia was going to court to plead for a man about to be executed, which is enough to bring up a vision of *The Merchant* to anyone steeped in Shakspere. A relation that the play bears to the *Loves Flatteries* has likewise been cited. The undesignated biographer of Robert Greene in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* observes that this tale of Sylvia "contains a review of

[5]Storojenko, Nicholas, "The Life of Robert Greene, 1878. Translated from the Russian by E. Z. B. Hodgetts, and included in A. B. Grosart's *The Complete Works of Robert Greene,* Huth Library Series, London, 1881-3, 15 vols. Vol. I, p. 70.

suitors recalling Portia's in *The Merchant of Venice*"[6] But the extent of the play's dependence upon these two works does not appear to have been sufficiently appreciated or investigated. Certainly other possibly less obvious but equally true similarities exist between the comedy and Greene's novels.

A synopsis of Giovanni Fiorentino's *Il Pecorone* (IV, i), the source from which the principal elements of the plot of *The Merchant* are derived, follows:

> A young gentleman of Florence, named Giannetto, was adopted by a wealthy merchant of Venice, named Ansaldo, who bestowed on him everything that the youth could desire. At length Giannetto desired to accompany certain friends on a merchandising expedition to Alexandria, and Ansaldo fitted him out with a splendid ship and goods to that end. But passing near the port of Belmonte, he was persuaded to leave his companions and try his fortune in winning the hand of the beautiful widow who reigned over that place. This lady has made it a law that any man who comes to Belmonte must woo her, and if he can win her he must take her for wife and be the lord of all the country; but if he cannot win her, he loses everything he has brought with him. Giannetto tried his luck, and it appeared for a while that he had charmed the lady completely—that he might even enjoy her person that night. Unfortunately, he did not know that she had drugged his wine, and he awoke next morning to find himself dismissed, all of his possessions gone.
>
> But so infatuated was the young man with the lady's charms that thrice the merchant Ansaldo put up money and a new ship for him to try his fortune. On the third and last time Ansaldo was forced to borrow ten thousand ducats of gold from a Jew at Mestri. And the condition of the loan was that if it were not paid on the feast of St. John, the Jew might take a pound of flesh from any part of Ansaldo's body. So the bond was signed, and Giannetto set sail again. On this occasion he was so fortunate as to win what he sought, and the lady wedded him with great pomp.
>
> There came a day when Giannetto recalled Ansaldo's bond, and was stricken with fear lest the ten thousand ducats had not been paid. Whereupon his lady bade him ride with speed to Venice, taking attendants and a hundred thousand ducats to cancel the debt. Meanwhile, the time having expired, the Jew had seized Ansaldo and made demand for the pound of flesh. There were merchants of Venice who offered to pay the money, but the Jew would not listen to them. Even when Giannetto arrived, bearing ten times the amount required under the bond, the man was equally obdurate.
>
> Now when Giannetto had left his lady she followed him to Venice, dressed in the garb of a lawyer, and with two attendants,

> put up at an inn. There she bade her servant relate that his master was a young man who had just completed his law studies at Bologna, and was returning homeward. By this ruse she was received with great civility. When she inquired of the landlord respecting the administration of justice in that city, he answered that it was too severe, and told her the circumstances of Ansaldo's bond and its forfeiture. Thereupon the lawyer caused a proclamation to be made that whoever had any questions of law to determine should have recourse to him; and Giannetto won the consent of the Jew that the famous lawyer should be called in consultation.
>
> In the trial that followed, the young lawyer freed Ansaldo by demanding that the Jew cut no more or less than the pound of flesh that his bond called for, and that he shed no drop of blood.[7]

The rest of the story relates the episode of the ring, which appears only in *Il Pecorone* and in *The Merchant of Venice,* and thus need not be retold here.

With this tale in mind, the true relationship between Greene's novels and Shakspere's play may be seen with at least some clarity. In the first place, as was suggested in the preceding study of the *Two Gentlemen of Verona,* Shakspere appears to have been led from the true source (*Il Pecorone*) into use of materials from a secondary source (*Mamillia* and the *Loves Flatteries*) because of certain very evident similarities that exist between the Italian tale and Greene's love-pamphlets:

> (1) The heroines—the Widow of Belmonte, Mamillia, and Sylvia—are all rich (the first two of them Italian) ladies, renowned for beauty and courted by many suitors.
>
> (2) The Lady of Belmonte and Mamillia go in disguise to the defense of a man doomed to die, and through their adroitness rescue him from death before the magistrates of the city.

We may now turn to a comparison of *Mamillia* with *The Merchant of Venice.* The following devices that tie the two pieces together are entirely lacking in the Tale in *Il Pecorone:*

Mamillia:

> The heroine, Mamillia,
> . . . came home to her father's house in Padua,
> where she had not remained long, before divers
> young Gentlemen drawen by the passing prayse of

---

[6]Fourteenth Edition, 1929, X, 855.

[7]An abridged version of this tale may be found in the New Variorum Edition, *The Merchant of Venice,* 6th Edition, 1888, Appendix, p. 298.

[8]*The Merchant of Venice, New Variorum,* p. 176-7.

her perfections which was bruted abroad through
al the Citie, repayred thither all in general,
hoping to get the goale. (I. 18).

The Merchant of Venice:

In Belmont is a lady—richly left;
And she is fair, and, fairer than that word,
Of wondrous virtues: sometimes from her eyes
I did receive fair speechless messages.
Her name is Portia; nothing undervalu'd
To Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portiä.
Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth;
For the four winds blow in from every coast
Renownëd suitors; and her sunny locks
Hang on her temples like a golden fleece;
Which makes her seat of Belmont Colchos' strand,
And many Jasons come in quest of her. (I, i, 161-73).

(2) Each inherits a fortune from her father on a condition set down in a will. And this will in both cases has to do with the choice of a suitor.

Mamillia:

" "I have left thee by my last will and testament onely heire and sole executor of all my lands and moveables, yet with this proviso, that if thou marrie with faithless Pharicles, that then thou shalt be disinherited." (I. 240).

Portia:

"I may neither choose whom I would, nor refuse whom I dislike; so is the will of a living daughter curb'd by the will of a dead father." (I, i, 22-24).

The reactions of the heroines to the surb of a father's cree are also similar. Mamillia declares that she will obey her father "only so far as nature allows" (I. 240). Portia, though she obeys, likewise feels that nature is hard to deny:

"The brain may devise laws for the blood; but a hot temper leaps o'er a cold decree: such a hare is madness the youth, to skip o'er the meshes of good counsel the cripple." (I, ii, 17-20).

(4) Each falls in love with a man of comparative poverty, and rejects the suits of men of wealth.

Mamillia:

For other of great birth, and no small wealth . . . have made great suite, and have offered large foefments to have my good will. (I. 109-10).

The Merchant of Venice:

> *Bassanio.* Oh my Antonio, had I but the means
> To hold a rival place with one of them,
> I have a mind presages me such thrift,
> That I should questionless be fortunate.
> (I, i, 173-6).

(5) Each has a woman confidant to advise her about love and the choice of a suitor—Mamillia her nurse, Castilla, Portia her waiting-maid, Nerissa.

(6) The callousness of Portia's Bassanio in his desire for a rich wife parallels the character of Mamillia's villain-hero, Pharicles.

(7) The father in each work desires that his daughter be married for love and love alone.

Mamillia (Gonzaga to Pharicles):

> ". . . rather wishing with Themistocles to marrye my daughter to a man, then to money: desiring likewise his choice to be for her goodness, and not for her goods, least if the knot be knit for wealth, it might be dissevered for Poverty. . . . being willing to marry my daughter, but neyther to buy her an husband, nor to set her to sale, unless the price her love." (I. 108-9).
>
> Your father was ever virtuous; and holy men at their deaths have good inspirations: therefore the lottery, that he hath devis'd in these three chests of gold, silver, and lead—whereof who chooses his meaning chooses you,—will no doubt, never be chosen by any rightly, but one who shall rightly love. (I, ii, 26-31).

(9) Both heroines are ladies from Padua, or seemingly so; for Padua is really Mamillia's home, while Portia assumes the disguise of a young doctor of Padua when she goes to Antonio's rescue. There is a queer mix-up at this point. Shakspere at first seems to have had in mind to let Portia pretend to come from Mantua. She says to Balthazar, in preparation for the journey to Venice:

> . . . take this letter
> And use thou all the endeavour of a man
> In speed to Mantua. (III, iv, 49-51).

But in IV, i, 116-17, the name of the city is changed:

> *Duke.* Come you from Padua, from Bellario?
> *Nerissa.* From both, my lord.

It likewise becomes Padua in V, i, 246:

> *Portia.* . . . . . .
> Here is a letter; read it at your leisure;
> It comes from Padua, from Bellario.

Shaksperian editors have logically corrected the mistake, preserving the *Padua* reading. Theobald explains the matter: " 'Tis evident to any diligent reader that we must restore, as I have done,—'In speed to Padua'; it is there, and not at 'Mantua,' Bellario liv'd. So afterwards, 'A messenger, with letters from the Doctor, new come from Padua.' And again, 'It comes from Padua, from Bellario.' Besides, 'Padua,' not Mantua,' is the place of education for the Civil Law in Italy."[8]

I doubt whether Shakspere thought anything about the "Civil Law in Italy." Certainly a positive fact must be faced: Mamillia came from *Padua,* not *Mantua,* to the defense of Phariclés. Did the poet at first disguise his source—and then forget? (The Lady in *Il Pecorone,* it may be recalled, came from Bologna).

The Anatomie of Loves Flatteries is perhaps even closer related to *The Merchant* than is *Mamillia.* Often it will be observed that the *Loves Flatteries,* after Greene's habit of self-plagiarism, repeats certain features found in the *Mamillia:*

(1) The virtue and renown of the heroine, the Lady Sylvia, runs true to form:

> Sylvia . . . grew so renowned for her famous feature almost throughout all Europe, that as they which came to Memphis thought that they had seen nothing unless they had viewed the Pyramides built by Rodope, so the strangers which arrived at Toledo thought their affairs not fully finished untill they had obtained the sight of her. (I, 269-70).

(2) As with Mamillia and Portia, Sylvia's father desires his daughter to marry for love.

There are certain other elements, however, that are common only to the *Loves Flatteries* and the play:

(1) There is a review of suitors.

> There repaired by mere chance at one time in one day three Gentlemen of sundry nations and divers dispositions, the first an Italian called S. Gradasso, the second a Frenchman named Monsieur de Vaste, the third an Englishman called master Petronius. Signor Gradasso was verie old but of great wealth, Monsieur de Vaste of surpassing beautie, but somewhat foolish, and master Petronius of great wit, but verie smal wealth. (I, 270-71).

It is in this device that *The Merchant of Venice* appears to lean heaviest on Greene. The "Gentlemen of sundry nations and divers dispositions" who come to woo Sylvia are surprisingly like Portia's "princely suitors" from "the four corners of the earth." Especially are Sylvia's "Frenchman named Monsieur de Vaste" and her "Englishman called master Petronius" of interest when compared with Portia's suitors. The Frenchman of the novel is of "surpassing beauty, but somewhat foolish." He calls his man Jaques to act as interpreter for him, "faining that he was utterly ignorant of the Spanish tongue." The two ideas of a man who is a fool and of a man who cannot speak a foreign tongue appear in Portia's and Nerissa's conversation regarding suitors, though in a somewhat mutiliated form. That Portia's Frenchman is equally as foolish as Sylvia's is not only made apparent but is considerably enlarged upon:

> *Nerissa.* How say you by the French lord, Monsieur Le Bon?
> *Portia.* God made him, and therefore let him pass for a man. In truth, I know it is a sin to be a mocker: but, he: why, he hath a horse better than the Neapolitan's, a better bad habit of frowning than the Count Palatine; he is every man in no man. . . .
> (I, ii, 60-5).

Portia, like Sylvia, has an Englishman for a suitor. Seemingly the necessity of an interpreter that Sylvia's Monsieur de Vaste feels has been grafted upon Portia's young Falconbridge:

> *Nerissa.* What say you, then, to Falconbridge, the young baron of England?
> *Portia.* You know I say nothing to him, for he understands not me nor I him: he hath neither Latin, French, nor Italian, and you will come into court and swear that I have a poor pennyworth in the English. (I, ii, 71-77).

But much of the similarity that exists between *The Anatomie of Love's Flatteries* and *The Merchant of Venice* in this particular device of an evaluation of suitors lies in mood rather than in anything else. Anyone who has caught the spirit of gay banter that runs through Portia's speeches to Nerissa will, I believe, find it again in Sylvia's address to her "Gentlemen":

> Signor Gradasso, quoth she, it was a law among the Caspians, that he which married after he had passed fiftie yeeres should at the common assemblees and feastes, sit in the lowest and vilest

> place, as one that had committed a fact repugnant to the law of nature, calling him which was well strooken in yeeres, & yet enamoured, that would frie in affection when he was whollie frozen in complexion, not an old lover, but a filthie foole, and a doting old leacher, and in my judgment they had great reason so to tearme him. . . . How can a young woman fixe her affection upoon an olde man, who in the night time in stead of talke telleth the clocke, crieth out of the gout, complaineth of the Ciatica, is combred with cramps, and troubled with the cough, having neither health to joy himself nor youth to enjoy her. . . . Sith then Signor Gradasso I count you being so old, not a fit match for my tender youth, I pray you at this time be content to take my nay for an answer. And as for you Jaques which have said so well in your masters behalf, I commend you for a faithful servant, though your reasons were so small effect. I confess Jaques, that nothing sooner delighteth the eye, contenteth the sense, or allureth the mind of a young maiden than beauty. . . . beautie cannot inflame the fancie so much in a moneth, as rediculous follie can quench in a moment. . . . What joy can that Gentlewoman have whose husband hath neither modestie to moderate his affection, nor manner to behave himself well in companie, who can neither be constant, because he is a foole, nor secret sith he is without sense. . . . So that Jaques I conclude that your master being somewhat foolish, and I my self none of the wisest, it were no good match: for two fooles in one bed are too many. Now Maister Petronius no longer to feed you with hope, I give you this *A dio.* (I. 289-95).

(2) Another similarity between *Loves Flatteries* and *The Merchant* is that there is a resemblance of symbols used in the choosing scene. Sylvia dreams of three trees, each standing for a particular suitor, and after being changed into a dove, she is told by Venus to choose in which she will build her nest. Portia is left three chests, each standing, in its way, for a suitor who is to choose. The source of the device has been assigned to the *Gesta Romanorum,* where the story of a choice among three vessels, respectively gold, silver, and lead, with inscriptions somewhat similar to those in the play, and a marriage depending on the right of choice occurs. Regardless of this relation to the *Gesta Romanorum,* however, it is thought provocative that a symbol of this sort should appear in a source under suspicion—a technical device of a like color as that in the play, and presenting the same theme of a lover's choice.

These *motifs,* which, according to my theory, were borrowed by Shakspere for his comedy out of Greene's two novels, are conspicuously absent in the *Il Pecorone,* IV, i.

The heroine of the Italian tale, though wealthy and beautiful, lacks the virtue of Mamillia, Sylvia, and Portia. Her suitors evidently came one at a time (much to their own discomfort), certainly not in droves. There is no father's will; no desire that the lady wed for love alone; no question of the choice of a suitor, unless we take the tests that are imposed upon the lady's lovers as a variation of this theme. This lady of Belmonte has no woman confidante; the man who wooes her desires not her wealth so much as her beauty, and he thus is, after all, a more conventional hero than either Pharicles or Bassanio. On going to the rescue of her husband's benefactor, the lady gives out that she is from Bologna, not Padua, as do Mamillia and Portia. There is no review of suitors here; nor is there the symbol of the three caskets, or of the three trees. So many features of Greene's two works present in *The Merchant* and yet absent in the Italian source seem to indicate that *Mamillia* and the *Loves Flatteries* have had a considerable influence upon Shakspere's comedy.

My thesis that Shakspere is considerably indebted to Greene's love-pamphlets in the composition of his *Two Gentlemen* and *The Merchant* has by now, I hope, taken on some semblance of a ruth. Especially, it seems to me, three points in the evidence given point to Greene as a source: (1) the appearance of the name *Silvia* in a play containing situations analogous to the *Loves Flatteries;* (2) Shakspere's use of the *convocation of suitors* and the *lover's choice* in surroundings that hint at a Greene background; and (3) the confusion of *Mantua* and *Padua* as places from which Portia went to Antonio's rescue—a problem that becomes reasonable only when we remember *Mamillia.*

In general this study is the continuation of an effort on my part to prove, for my own satisfaction at least, a notion that I have had in mind for a number of years: that Robert Greene deserves a vastly more important place as a forerunner and mentor of William Shakspere than has yet been accorded him.

East Texas State Teachers College
Commerce, Texas.

A LETTER

New York City,
April 23, 1938.

William Shakspere, Esq.,
Late of New Place,
Stratford-on-Avon, England.

Dear Mr. Shakspere:

Today is your 374th birthday, and I want to send you my congratulations, and my best regards, and all kinds of greetings and wishes for Many Happy Returns of the Day. You have, in Centuries past, had a great many Happy Birthdays, and I know you will have more next year, and the year after, and for years and centuries to come. You see, you died when you were comparatively young, only fifty-two years old, and I wonder if you realize how widely people think of you today, three hundred years later?

You haven't seen Stratford lately? You would still recognize it, Mr. Shakspere, but it has changed a great deal—and largely because of you; so it is partly your own fault. It is no longer the quiet little village with the dirt street through the center, with half-timbered houses, and the sweet Avon softly flowing past. The house on Henley Street where you were born has been made into a Shakspere Museum, with relics and pictures, and books, and postcards; and motor busses arriving every hour from London. I am not so sure you would like it, Mr. Shakspere; but maybe you wouldn't mind it. You see, there aren't many actual traces of you left, so the people have to make the most out of the little that they have: The desk that may have been yours when you went to school, the chair you may have sat in, a dish you may have eaten from; but nothing substantial, like a hat with your initials in it, or your Social Security card.

The Church where you were buried is still there, a little way outside of town; a sweet, cool place with a wide green lawn around it and shady lime trees and the Avon near by. That is a funny inscription they have on the tombstone:

> "Blest be the man that spares these stones
> And curst be he that moves my bones."

Did you write that? Or did your friend, the local stone cutter?

That house you bought, New Place, when you were only thirty-two years old but already a prosperous maker of plays,—that isn't standing any more. It must have been a fine place, though, for the lawn around it is green and fertile and the trees are shady. Were you in the habit of walking up and down the paths of the garden in the cool of the evening, and did you recite a little to yourself:

> "I know a bank where the wild thyme blows,
> Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows,"

and did you know inwardly, and for certainty, that the plays you had written and were the success of the hour in London would last longer than their loud applauding audience, longer than you, longer than New Place and its gardens and paths—as long even as the English Language shall be spoken anywhere in this world?

What happened to the manuscripts of all your plays? We haven't found a single one of them. There are seven signatures in existence which we believe to be yours, but not another scrap of your writing anywhere. We have only a few facts of your life; and all that survived of your life's work are three or four small volumes of poems and the uncertain texts of the precious "Quartos" (those little single volumes of some of your plays); and that brave, noble and excellent volume, the First Folio, the first collected edition of your plays which your devoted friends, John Heming and Henry Condell, had printed in 1623, seven years after

your death—that single volume which today is the cornerstone and monument of English Literature.

You see how little we know of you, Mr. Shakspere. But when we celebrate your birthday today, we have your good works, and we are grateful for the treasures that you have left to us. Plays, yes; for the stage, yes; and yet truth of life is in them. They, in their beauty, support us. They cheer us in this uncertain life. May we carry their memory into *our* everlasting rest, so that *our* everlasting dreams may be sweet.

"The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit shall dissolve;
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep."

Dear Mr. Shakspere, believe me to be, on this your Birthday, with renewed assurances of my affection and regard, as always,

Very sincerely yours,

ARTHUR A. HOUGHTON, JR.

New York, N. Y.

REVIEW

ELIZABETHAN FUSTIAN: *A study in the social and political backgrounds of the drama, with particular reference to Christopher Marlowe.* By ELEANOR GRACE CLARK, Ph.D. Vol. I. Oxford Press, 56 East 11th St., N. Y., 1937.

Dr. Clark has assembled in this volume a great deal of interesting information or conjecture concerning one of the striking features of Elizabethan drama, its topical allusiveness. It is the feature which has least well preserved itself through the centuries; for allusions, which were more or less arch and covert in their own day, easily lost distinct meaning for posterity, and the author deserves the gratitude of her readers for the high ratio of information to conjecture in the examples she has here chosen to discuss. She has selected her material wisely, commented upon it with critical reserve and buttressed her judgments by large quotation from Sir Edmund Chambers and other sound authorities.

In short, the author's purpose in the present volume appears to be the sane and gracious one of showing in regard to Elizabethan dramatic topicality what should be believed rather than what might be imagined; but this volume, she tells us, "is a preface, albeit a long one, of Volume II, which is a discussion of topicality in the plays of Christopher Marlowe."

The term, *Fustian Drama,* is employed in an arbitrary and unauthorized sense. Professor Clark defines "fustian" as "the trick of saying one thing and meaning another, of using an historical or mythological episode as a cloak to cover some personal or political allusion"; and she asserts that though other names were used for this "stock device of the dramatists for avoiding trouble with the censor . . . by far the most popular Elizabethan word for it was *fustian.*" It is too bad that this is not so, for we rather need a brief technical label for the thing; but there seems to be no evidence that the Elizabethans ever used "fustian" as a literary term to mean more than what is implied in the New English Dictionary definition, "inflated, turgid, or inappropriately lofty language"; or, as Onions puts it in his *Shakespeare Glossary,* "bombast, rant, gibberish." There is, of course, plenty of precedent for the acceptance of new meanings when they are found to serve a purpose.

TUCKER BROOKE.

Yale University
New Haven, Conn.